E/1996/32/Rev.1
E/ICEF/1996/12/Rev.1

United Nations

EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND

Report on the first, second and third regular sessions and annual session of 1996

Economic and Social Council
Official Records, 1996
Supplement No. 12

E/I996/32/Rev.1
E/ICEF/1996/12/Rev.1

Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund

Report on the first, second and third regular sessions
and annual session of 1996

Economic and Social Council
Official Records, 1996
Supplement No. 12

United Nations, New York, 1996

Note

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

0252-3507

CONTENTS

Chapter		Paragraphs	Page

Part one

FIRST REGULAR SESSION OF 1996

I.	ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION	1 - 10	2
	A. Election of the officers of the Board for 1996	1	2
	B. Statements by the President and the Executive Director	2 - 4	2
	C. Adoption of the agenda	5 - 10	3
II.	DELIBERATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD	11 - 130	6
	A. Follow-up to management reform and the UNICEF mission statement	11 - 24	6
	B. UNICEF emergency operations	25 - 37	8
	C. Country notes	38 - 98	10
	D. Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women	99 - 107	24
	E. The fiftieth anniversary of UNICEF	108 - 111	26
	F. Follow-up to decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council	112 - 115	26
	G. Other matters	116 - 127	27
	H. Closing remarks	128 - 130	30

Part two

SECOND REGULAR SESSION OF 1996

I.	ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION	131 - 135	32
	A. Statements by the President and the Executive Director	131 - 132	32
	B. Adoption of the agenda	133 - 135	32
II.	DELIBERATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD	136 - 283	34
	A. Proposals for UNICEF cooperation and programme reviews	136 - 197	34
	B. Mid-term country programme reviews and evaluations	198 - 205	44
	C. Budgetary matters	206 - 238	45
	D. Progress report on the management excellence programme	239 - 246	50
	E. Annual report to the Economic and Social Council/ follow-up to the triennial policy review on operational activities for development	247 - 253	52

CONTENTS (continued)

Chapter | Paragraphs | Page

F. 1996 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award .... 254 - 255 53

G. Other matters .... 256 - 281 53

H. Concluding remarks .... 282 - 283 57

Part three

1996 ANNUAL SESSION

I. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION .... 284 - 291 60

A. Statements by the President of the Board and the Executive Director .... 284 - 285 60

B. Adoption of the agenda .... 286 - 289 60

C. Election of officers of the Executive Board ..... 290 - 291 62

II. DELIBERATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD .... 292 - 490 63

A. Report of the Executive Director .... 292 - 312 63

B. Progress report on follow-up to the World Summit for Children .... 313 - 322 67

C. Medium-term plan for the period 1996-1999 .... 323 - 349 68

D. Review of UNICEF policies and strategies on child protection .... 350 - 352 73

E. Conceptual framework for UNICEF emergency interventions .... 353 - 366 73

F. Greeting Card and related Operations .... 367 - 380 75

G. Progress report on the Management Excellence Programme .... 381 - 406 77

H. Harmonization of budget presentations .... 407 - 417 81

I. Draft report of the Secretary-General on enhancing internal oversight mechanisms in operational funds and programmes .... 418 - 428 84

J. Update on the audit of the Kenya country office .... 429 - 431 86

K. Reports on the meetings of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education and the UNICEF/World Health Organization Joint Committee on Health Policy .... 432 - 439 86

L. Report of the Working Group on Documentation .... 440 - 445 87

M. Presentation of the 1996 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award 446 88

CONTENTS (continued)

Chapter		Paragraphs	Page
	N. Other matters	447 - 485	88
	O. Concluding remarks by the Executive Director and the President of the Board	486 - 490	94
III.	COMMEMORATION OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF UNICEF	491 - 496	96

Part four

THIRD REGULAR SESSION OF 1996

I.	ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION	497 - 505	98
	A. Statements by the President of the Executive Board and the Executive Director	497 - 501	98
	B. Adoption of the agenda	502 - 505	99
II.	DELIBERATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD	506 - 612	101
	A. Proposals for UNICEF cooperation and programme reviews: final country programme recommendations for implementation in 1997	506 - 528	101
	B. Oral report on the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa	529 - 536	104
	C. International Child Development Centre	537 - 544	106
	D. Outline of the report on the implementation of the health strategy for UNICEF	545 - 549	107
	E. Report on the Management Excellence Programme	550 - 561	108
	F. Oral progress report on the audit of the Kenya country office	562 - 564	110
	G. Oral report on the harmonization of budget presentations	565 - 580	111
	H. Oral status report on Greeting Card and related Operations	581 - 583	113
	I. Discussion on the allocation of general resources	584 - 597	114
	J. Working Group on Documentation	598 - 599	116
	K. Programme of work for 1997	600 - 601	116
	L. Other matters	602 - 608	117
	M. Concluding remarks	609 - 612	118

Annex. Decisions adopted by the Executive Board during 1996 120

Part one

FIRST REGULAR SESSION OF 1996

Held at United Nations Headquarters from 22 to 25 January 1996

I. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

A. Election of the officers of the Board for 1996

1. The officers of the Executive Board for the year 1996 were elected as follows:

President: H.E. Ambassador Ion Gorita (Romania)

Vice-Presidents: Ms. Lyda Aponte de Zacklin (Venezuela)
Mr. Jan Top Christensen (Denmark)
Mr. John Aggrey (Ghana)
Mrs. Mitra Vasisht (India)

B. Statements by the President and the Executive Director

2. The President said that it was especially significant that Romania assumed the Presidency of the Executive Board in 1996 because it was in Eastern Europe that UNICEF began its vital work on behalf of children and women some 50 years ago in the wake of the Second World War. Since then, spurred on by UNICEF, the countries of the world had made great strides to ensure the survival, protection and development of their children. The mid-decade review of progress towards the goals for the year 2000 set by the World Summit for Children, scheduled for 1996, would provide ample evidence of progress made in many areas. However, much more remained to be done. According to the "anti-war agenda" championed by UNICEF in the State of the World's Children 1996 report, a staggering number of children today were victims of conflict. Those children must be the priority of UNICEF as it commemorated the past and planned for the future. On the work of the Board, he particularly emphasized the need for streamlining and rationalizing the volume and content of the documentation.

3. The Executive Director said that throughout the fiftieth anniversary year, UNICEF would be joining with a broad range of partners to commemorate the milestone. However, celebrating past achievements did not mean looking backwards. Rather, UNICEF would draw on the lessons of the past to meet the challenges of the present and move to the future. Anniversary activities had begun with the launch in December 1995 of the State of the World's Children 1996 report. The report highlighted the terrible symmetry at either end of the span of the existence of UNICEF. Founded in the aftermath of the Second World War, UNICEF again was faced with the challenge of meeting children's needs in the proliferating conflicts of the post-Cold War era, in addition to the larger silent emergencies caused by poverty and underdevelopment. The proposals of the anti-war agenda would make a difference only to the degree to which they would be acted upon. So UNICEF was taking action. To enforce the call for a ban on anti-personnel mines, UNICEF recently had announced that it would not do business with companies that produced land-mines. Work to advance the anti-war agenda would prepare the ground for the important United Nations study on the impact of armed conflict on children being prepared under the leadership of Graça Machel for presentation to the General Assembly next fall. It must become unthinkable that children be denied humanitarian assistance or be considered legitimate targets in times of war. Children themselves must be helped to become agents of peace and tolerance.

4. The year 1996 was also the mid-point in the 10-year effort to achieve the goals set at the World Summit for Children. The mid-decade review called for in the Plan of Action would take place in September at the United Nations, when the Secretary-General would present a progress report to the General Assembly. UNICEF was in the process of gathering data on the mid-decade goals, and countries would soon be asked to hold their own mid-decade reviews. Global and national mid-decade reviews of progress should not only tally what

has and what has not been accomplished, but also should provide lessons for tackling the goals for the year 2000. Some of those goals were complex, and achieving them would require innovative thinking and bold solutions. The updated policies and strategies adopted by the Executive Board in recent years would be an important contribution to this effort.

C. Adoption of the agenda

5. The agenda of the session, as contained in document E/ICEF/1996/2, was adopted as amended orally. The agenda contained the following items:

Item 1: Opening of the session:

(a) Election of the officers of the Board for 1996

(b) Statements by the President and the Executive Director

Item 2: Adoption of the provisional agenda and timetable and organization of work

Item 3: Follow-up to management reform

UNICEF mission statement

Item 4: UNICEF emergency operations

Item 5: Country notes:

(a) Africa

(b) Americas and the Caribbean

(c) Asia

(d) Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States

(e) Middle East and North Africa

Item 6: Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women

Item 7: The fiftieth anniversary of UNICEF

Item 8: Follow-up to decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council

Item 9: Other matters

Item 10: Closing of the session: remarks by the Executive Director and the President

6. Prior to the adoption of the agenda, one delegation reported on progress made in her country with regard to children's development, including measures to combat child labour. However, her Government was concerned about the situation of children the world over, especially the use of children as prostitutes. UNICEF should focus on halting such practices in developed and developing countries. UNICEF also should focus on children as agents of change and learn from children themselves. In a time of diminishing resources, achieving these and other goals for children would be difficult for many countries, including her own. She asked the Executive Director to focus attention on the issue of resources, as the assistance and cooperation of UNICEF were vital to efforts for children.

7. Several delegations proposed that an informal discussion of the country notes be held in addition to the formal debate by the Executive Board, to allow for discussions with field representatives and regional directors. Another delegation said that the Executive Board should exercise some caution and not detract from the substantive discussion of the country notes. It was important that informal meetings not take place simultaneously with Board meetings to allow for full participation. The Executive Director said that the regional directors would be available for informal consultations with delegations and would be able to share information on consultations held at the country level.

8. One speaker said that the country notes were titled "country programme strategy notes", although according to General Assembly resolutions, strategy notes were not supposed to be discussed by the governing bodies of funds and programmes, but only taken note of by them. Another delegation, supported by others, agreed with the question raised on the nomenclature of the documents. If they were referred to as "country strategy notes", no discussions were permitted because the relevant General Assembly resolution stated that such documents were for reference purposes only. However, the speaker was not aware of any decision by the Executive Board to refer to "country programme strategy notes", and could accept a reference to "country programmes", which could be discussed by the Board, with relevant inputs to be incorporated into the final country programme recommendations (CPRs). It also was stated that the country programmes had been negotiated with Governments and it would not be appropriate for the Executive Board to have substantive debates on them. A delegation added that according to Executive Board decision 1995/8 (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1), the Board had an opportunity to provide input to the ongoing country programme preparation process through its comments on the country notes. The Executive Director suggested that the documents be referred to as "country notes" to avoid confusion with the "country strategy notes" referred to in General Assembly resolution 47/199 of 22 December 1992 and 50/120 of 13 December 1995. The secretariat would issue a corrigendum to that effect, if the Board found it useful. 1/

9. In accordance with rule 50.2 and the annex of the Rules of Procedure, the Secretary of the Executive Board announced the observer delegations that had submitted credentials for the session and had advised the secretariat of the agenda items in which they had a special interest. They were (with the agenda items indicated, if any, shown in parentheses): Albania; Algeria; Argentina; Armenia (3, 4, 5, 8); Australia; Austria; Bangladesh (all); Belarus; Belgium; Benin (all); Bolivia; Bosnia and Herzegovina (4); Costa Rica; Côte d'Ivoire (5); Croatia; Czech Republic; Djibouti; Egypt; El Salvador; Eritrea; Ethiopia; Finland; Gabon; Germany (all); Guatemala; Guinea; Guyana; Haiti; Holy See (all); Hungary; Iraq (5 (e)); Ireland (all); Israel; Kazakstan (all); Kyrgyzstan; Latvia (all); Lithuania; Malawi; Mali; Malta (all); Mexico (all); Mongolia (5 (c)); Nepal (all); Nicaragua; Nigeria; Oman; Panama; Philippines; Poland (all); Portugal; Republic of Moldova; Senegal; Slovenia; South Africa (all); Spain; Sri Lanka (5 (c)); Sudan; Tajikistan; Togo; Tunisia; United Republic of Tanzania; Uruguay; and Zimbabwe.

10. In addition, Palestine (5 (e)) had submitted credentials, as had the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); the United Nations Office at Vienna (Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division); the World Health Organization (WHO); and l'Agence de coopération culturelle et technique (Cultural and Technical Cooperation Agency). A number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) also had submitted credentials: Anglican Communion; Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University; Commonwealth Medical Association; International Catholic Child Bureau; International Committee of the Red Cross; International Council on Social Welfare; International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies;

1/ Subsequently issued as document E/ICEF/1996/P/L.41.

International Federation of Settlements and Neighbourhood Centres; International Federation of University Women; International Movement ATD Fourth World; International Social Service; La Leche League International; Pathways to Peace; Pax Christi International; Rehabilitation International; Viet Nam Committee for Protection and Care of Children; World Information Transfer; and World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations.

II. DELIBERATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

A. Follow-up to management reform and the UNICEF mission statement

Progress report on the management excellence programme in UNICEF

11. The Executive Board had before it a progress report on the management excellence programme in UNICEF (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.3), which was introduced by the Executive Director.

12. Many delegations expressed appreciation for the report and its clear presentation of the link between the management excellence activities and the recommendations made by the original study done by Booz Allen & Hamilton. It was suggested that the matrix included in the progress report provide information on action taken and results achieved, specifying decisions to be made by the Executive Board or the secretariat. The secretariat said that specifying responsibility for decision-making would be difficult until the nature of specific recommendations had been determined. Many speakers welcomed the approach being taken by the secretariat and said that they looked forward to the recommendations of the project teams. Several speakers also noted the savings made in the overall budget for these activities.

13. Delegations expressed appreciation for the priority given to ensuring Executive Board involvement in the management excellence process and the use of inter-sessional meetings as a means of keeping the Board informed and of providing opportunities for the Board to provide guidance and direction. One speaker said that the inter-sessional meetings should be limited to providing information on progress rather than as a forum for substantive consultation. The speaker also suggested that informal but substantive discussions should be arranged before project recommendations were presented at formal Executive Board sessions and that a working group should be established to study the recommendations. Other delegations said that inter-sessional meetings should not be for decision-making, but that exchanges of view were necessary. One speaker said that the inter-sessional meetings should enable the Board to provide guidance on issues and cited the positive results of similar meetings in the development of the mission statement. Other delegations said that the Board should be sensitive to the balance between following progress in a responsible way and avoiding interfering in the secretariat's work, especially in the intermediate phase when recommendations were being developed. The Executive Director highlighted the importance of receiving feedback and guidance on issues, as in the case of the mission statement, and said that she saw inter-sessional meetings as an opportunity to provide information and to allow opportunities for comment by Board members on the secretariat's work as preparation for formal Board sessions.

14. Delegations requested that an inter-sessional meeting be held sometime after the January meeting of the Steering Committee and suggested that staff representatives participate in discussions of the process of consultations with staff. The secretariat agreed. Several speakers endorsed the participatory process and others expressed appreciation to the UNICEF staff who were contributing to this process and carrying out their normal duties at the same time. A number of speakers stressed that staff participation and involvement in the management excellence efforts were important for ownership of the process. One delegation suggested that the advisory councils should become more formal and structured. Another speaker stressed the importance of information reaching National Officers. The secretariat expressed a strong commitment to staff participation as a necessary requirement for better implementation, enhanced staff morale and ownership of the process. Heads of all UNICEF offices had been urged to participate in strengthening management excellence by making improvements in their own offices.

15. Speakers referred to the need for enhanced consultation with Governments, and some said the project team on Effective Field Management was especially relevant. Some speakers cited interviews with Executive Board members by the team examining relations with National Committees for UNICEF as a good example.

16. Some delegations said that UNICEF management excellence efforts should take into account reform activities being undertaken by other United Nations bodies. One delegation cited harmonization of budgets and joint reporting as examples of ways to stimulate cooperation among and coordination between agencies. The Executive Director stressed that UNICEF was working to be efficient within the context of the United Nations system.

17. A few speakers raised specific questions regarding the external consultancies on financial management systems, information resource management (IRM) and supply activities. The Executive Director said that all recommendations would be shared with the Executive Board and that internal reviews of the recommendations were to ensure value for money. Specifically, terms of reference for the study on the profitability of greeting card and product sales would include determining comparability between countries; the supply study would address quality assurance; the IRM study was examining performance results and how they are used in programmes; and the study on financial management systems would take into account financial systems of other agencies.

18. To concerns raised about the linkages between the various project teams, the secretariat said that coordination was assured through the Management Task Force and regular meetings of team leaders.

19. A few speakers, together with the secretariat, emphasized the growing role and importance of National Committees for UNICEF. One delegation said that issues emerging from the project team examining relations with National Committees, such as new typologies for a UNICEF presence in countries, might require guidance by the Executive Board. Another speaker said that the project team looking at relations with intergovernmental organizations and NGOs should take into account that UNICEF needed to work closely with NGOs and that the design of country programmes should include their views.

20. One speaker asked about the status of the working group established to examine relations between the Executive Board and the secretariat being headed by the Deputy Executive Director, External Relations. The secretariat said that the working group had met with the Bureau on 19 December 1995 and sought guidance on how to proceed. Through their regional groups, Board members were to discuss the matter and a meeting of the working group with the new Bureau would be arranged shortly.

UNICEF mission statement

21. The Executive Board had before it a proposal for a UNICEF mission statement (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.2), which was introduced by the Executive Director. Almost all delegations expressed appreciation for the open and participatory process used to develop the mission statement, including inter-sessional meetings of the Executive Board.

22. Various delegations suggested amendments to the proposed text and some suggested that a drafting session be held to that end. One delegation in particular hesitated to support the draft for a number of reasons. First, there was confusion in the draft as to the ultimate mission of UNICEF and the mandate it had been given to carry out. The mission of UNICEF was to promote the well-being of children the world over and, in particular, in developing countries. With regard to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the protection of children's rights was extremely important in promoting their general welfare, and the delegation supported the advocacy role of UNICEF in

that area. However, defending the rights of children was for UNICEF the means, and promoting their welfare the central mission. In addition, UNICEF should be promoting children's welfare through the empowerment of women.

23. Summarizing the discussion, the President said that the mission statement would continue to be discussed and that there would be opportunities for adaptation in the future. The Executive Board agreed to adopt the mission statement as presented by the Executive Director, without amendment.

24. The Executive Director thanked the Board and assured members that the secretariat's immediate priority would be to disseminate and popularize the UNICEF mission globally. She added that in adopting the mission statement at the first session of 1996, the fiftieth anniversary year of UNICEF, the Board had sent a strong message of support and consensus on the core of the work of the organization. (See the annex, decision 1996/1, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

B. UNICEF emergency operations

25. The Executive Board had before it a report on UNICEF emergency services: mission and strategies (E/ICEF/1996/4) and a report on UNICEF emergency operations in 1995 (E/ICEF/1996/7). The Executive Director made some introductory remarks, which were followed by a statement by a representative of the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA). A representative of the World Food Programme (WFP) also addressed the Executive Board. The Director of the UNICEF Office of Emergency Programmes made an in-depth presentation of the two reports before the Board.

26. In general, delegations expressed support for the secretariat's efforts in producing the report on the UNICEF emergency mission and strategies. However, speakers raised several issues, including the need for further clarification of the continuum from relief to development; local capacity-building to enhance cost-effectiveness; coordination with DHA, other United Nations agencies and the donor community; and more effective mechanisms to avert crises.

27. Some delegations supported the developmental approach taken in dealing with emergencies, saying that sustained development was essential to preventing these emergencies. Other delegations recommended the development of strong linkages between relief and development activities. This "gray area" needed more comprehensive analysis and the development of a transitional mechanism. One speaker said that UNICEF should maintain the delicate balance in the allocation of resources between relief and development. Other speakers said that the use of local consultants and organizations for capacity-building would lead to a better allocation of resources and support the developmental process.

28. In response, the secretariat stressed the importance of a decentralized field-based structure. On the question of maintaining a balance between relief and development, there was a need for action during a crisis while maintaining a recovery perspective. The process of strengthening the UNICEF emergency response capacity was not taking place in isolation from mainstream activities.

29. Many delegations commended the work undertaken by UNICEF in emergencies and welcomed the organization's timely response. One speaker said that in addition to emergency interventions, UNICEF should continue working in post-conflict recovery and reconstruction activities. Other delegations asked what constituted an emergency and requested further clarification on this subject. UNICEF was urged to respond to all kinds of emergencies, including "silent" emergencies that affected large numbers of children throughout the world and "forgotten" emergencies, i.e., those that failed to capture

newspaper headlines. One speaker asked what strategies were being employed for the "silent" emergency of AIDS orphans in Africa, and another speaker wanted UNICEF to continue to provide assistance to women and children affected by natural disasters. Some delegations spoke of the detrimental effects of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster and thanked UNICEF for the assistance provided to address the problem.

30. Some delegations suggested that preventive actions were extremely important during "silent" emergencies in preventing them from becoming more catastrophic "loud" emergencies. There were various suggestions for preventive actions, including stand-by arrangements and greater emphasis on strategies for sustainable development.

31. Several delegations stressed the need to strengthen coordination mechanisms with DHA, other United Nations agencies, the donor community and NGOs. Some speakers said that UNICEF should cooperate with national Governments in setting up response mechanisms. Delegations also asked about UNICEF cooperation with partners and how its contribution to humanitarian operations strengthened the overall response to emergencies. The need for a process of assessment of lessons learned was cited by many delegations. One speaker said that assessments should be made of the contribution of UNICEF cooperation with its partners and within the United Nations system.

32. One delegation urged UNICEF to strengthen the capacity of its staff and partners to respond in times of crisis. Other delegations encouraged the increased use of local consultants as being both cost-effective and contributing to capacity-building. It was suggested that the Emergency Programme Fund be used to enhance regional capacities. The secretariat said that UNICEF recognized the need for increased local capacity-building and stressed strengthening partnerships with and providing support to local NGOs, national Governments and local communities, while also working at the family level.

33. A speaker said that the rapid response teams, together with the Operations Centre, should be strengthened at regional level. Another speaker asked how the teams were to be financed and what their functions were when members were not deployed in emergencies.

34. Several delegations said that UNICEF needed to formalize partnerships through memoranda of understanding, which should provide clear accountability and allocation of responsibility. The secretariat drew attention to the ongoing process of developing these memoranda (for example, with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and WFP) and added that cooperative agreements and arrangements were being set up with NGOs and other organizations.

35. There were several questions raised about UNICEF financial capacity during the relief and developmental phases of emergencies. There also were inquiries on the diversion of funds from regular programmes to emergencies and the modalities of switching from one category to another. The secretariat replied that the diversion of funds and/or reprogramming measures in a given emergency were undertaken in agreement with the Government in order to meet the needs of children in distress. A speaker said that because UNICEF espoused a two-pronged approach, i.e., dealing with both emergency and development, the organization should be able to show that its human and financial resources were capable of supporting both, and that the basic package of additional services in emergencies should be financed through supplementary funds. Several delegations supported greater resource mobilization for countries in need. It was stated that even if much of the funding was from supplementary funds, a heavy burden was placed on administrative resources by increased emergency activities because of the large percentage of total expenditure on emergencies (24 per cent in 1993-1994).

36. A number of speakers touched on various policy issues. Several delegations expressed support for the four-pronged approach to emergency assistance, comprising preventive actions, preparedness, emergency assistance and rehabilitation and recovery assistance. Other delegations expressed satisfaction with the UNICEF policy on not knowingly procuring materials and services from companies involved with the manufacture of land-mines. However, one speaker said that UNICEF should advocate more strongly in favour of a ban on land-mines. On the implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/56 of 28 July 1995 on strengthening coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations, it was stated that the resolution clearly identified the need to evaluate individual response capacities in addition to reviewing the overall United Nations response capacity, and that the implementation of this resolution should be coordinated with other United Nations agencies. The secretariat replied that UNICEF was participating in the task force set up by DHA on follow-up to the resolution. In reference to the proposed optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, one delegation supported raising the draft age of children to 18 years. Another delegation sought clarification on the role of reproductive health in emergencies and cited a draft field manual on the subject outlining various protocols to be followed by United Nations personnel in that area, including services related to the distribution of contraceptives and post-coital contraception. The delegation requested specific written assurances that UNICEF would continue to act within its mandate, which did not include the provision of the services described in the draft field manual.

37. On the mobilization of resources, one delegation stated that in the past, donors have not given adequate attention to certain emergencies because they lacked sufficient information to judge their severity as against situations receiving greater publicity, and requested that in every emergency appeal it issues, UNICEF should provide a brief overall picture of all of its ongoing emergency operations so that the emergency for which the appeal is being issued may be placed in context. (See the annex, decision 1996/2, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

C. Country notes

38. The Executive Board had before it a series of country notes (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.1-E/ICEF/1996/P/L.41). The President recalled that in decision 1995/8 (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1), adopted at the first regular session of 1995, the Executive Board had decided that the secretariat, in consultation with recipient Governments, would inform the Board at an early stage of its preliminary ideas regarding the mix and weight given to programme strategies and priorities in each country programme. That would be done by submitting a brief county note to the Board for comments.

39. The Board agreed with the President that following a general introduction by the Executive Director on the process followed in the preparation of country notes, delegations would have the opportunity to make general comments on the country notes and the process followed in their preparation. The country notes for each region would then be considered, preceded by introductions by the respective regional directors. Following those discussions, the Board would take note of the comments made by delegations, which the secretariat would share with the Governments concerned. The country notes would subsequently be developed into full CPRs and submitted to the Executive Board at its third regular session of 1996 for approval on a "no objection" basis, as indicated in decision 1995/8.

General discussion on process

40. A delegation, speaking on behalf of a group of States and supported by representatives of two other regional groups, said that it was important to observe the provision of decision 1995/8 that affirmed that the recipient

Government is responsible for the preparation and the ownership of the country programme of cooperation as well as the coordination of donor assistance. Because the purpose of the country note was to inform the Board of the progress of the preparation of the country programme strategy, the scope of the Board's discussion should focus on a general level rather than on individual country notes. Several other delegations supported the new process for approval of country programmes and the Executive Board's role in formulating programme strategies. Another speaker said that the new process, with the inclusion of the country notes, had increased the workload for both members and the secretariat, but it was useful for upgrading the quality of programmes.

41. A number of delegations said they were committed to implementing decision 1995/8 in terms of the Board's responsibility to provide comments on the country notes. Several delegations agreed that the recipient Government had the responsibility for the preparation of the country programme, but also said that decision 1995/8 called upon the Executive Board to comment on the country note so as to ensure that UNICEF policies were being taken into account in the country programmes.

42. A delegation expressed concern about the high levels of supplementary funding proposed in most of the country notes and asked whether UNICEF had assurances from donors that supplementary funding would be available. The country note should specify a core programme to be supported through general resources and differentiated from the portion of the country programme which would require supplementary funding. Other delegations also voiced concern about levels of supplementary funding. It was suggested that the country note include a statement on the status of supplementary funding achieved during the previous programme and that the country note present a full picture of resources allocated to the programme by the recipient Government and all donor partners.

43. Several delegations commented on the importance of supplementary funding. One speaker said that the quality of strategic programming in UNICEF cooperation had improved significantly and suggested that donors provide a higher degree of certainty in providing supplementary funding for multi-year periods. A second delegation urged that while objectives should not be overly ambitious with respect to raising supplementary funds, they should be optimistic. A third delegation stated that the secretariat had properly considered the balance between two key factors: the actual needs for supplementary funds; and the ability, based on past successes, of the organization to raise and utilize supplementary funds. Another delegation stated that the African countries had many needs and varied strategies according to their country situations, and needed supplementary funding more than some other countries. There was a contradiction in donor countries' call for a reduction in the number of priorities in the country note and their indication that supplementary funds might not be available.

44. A number of delegations also expressed concern about the levels of general resources allocations presented in the country notes. Several of them stated that some countries might not be able to utilize fully the proposed general resources allocations due to low capacity for implementation. In contrast, other countries might be in a position to contribute more resources to the cooperation and, therefore, would not require such high levels of general resources. Two delegations stated that they looked forward to the proposed discussion at a future Board session on the criteria for the allocation of general resources, and one of them stated that it was concerned about the inadequate levels of resources being allocated to the least developed countries. The same delegation requested that the approval of general resources allocations for the countries being reviewed be deferred until the Board had reviewed the medium-term plan. One speaker suggested that the country note make more specific references both to Governments' policies and budgetary contributions to the various programmes proposed for UNICEF assistance.

45. The Acting Deputy Executive Director, Programmes, said that the secretariat recognized that UNICEF resources were not able to address all aspects of countries' goals for children and women, and that the roles of other partners, both multilateral and bilateral, were very important and needed to be well coordinated. The master plan of operations to be formulated for each country programme detailed the ways in which limited UNICEF resources would be used.

46. One delegation recommended that a stronger analysis of the lessons learned from past programme cooperation and final programme evaluations should be included in the country note. Another delegation cited the country note for Bhutan for its reflection of the Government's planning framework and the harmonization of the roles of various donors and asked about the extent to which this approach was being used in other country programmes. Several other delegations stated that many country notes appeared to be too ambitious and did not present well thought out strategic roles for UNICEF cooperation. These delegations also cited the lack of feasible, measurable objectives and said that the scope and objectives of the cooperation should be much clearer in the CPRs. The country note should show more clearly how UNICEF cooperation related to the roles of other multilateral and bilateral donors. In this context, another delegation urged that the country note present a clearer picture of the proposed activities of UNICEF and the plans of the recipient Government and other donors, thus illuminating a pattern of closer partnerships. One delegation said that the country notes did not sufficiently demonstrate the UNICEF priority to Africa, and sought a clarification on UNICEF support to the Bamako Initiative from headquarters and regional levels. In addition, the quality of the country notes was not sufficiently homogeneous and some were more precise than others in terms of data.

47. Another delegation stated that the country notes reflected good intentions, with advocacy and capacity-building strategies becoming more prominent, but it was difficult to discern how they would be translated into practice. It also would be important to assess the impact of the lessons learned by employing a risk evaluation and benefit analysis. Another speaker added that the major themes of the strategies and the geographic focus or coverage of the country notes should be clearer. However, another delegation said that the country notes were not supposed to present the details of the proposed programme, but were frameworks, admittedly too ambitious and broad in some instances. The CPRs would show more clearly how UNICEF assistance, with its limited resources, would make a distinctive contribution, especially with respect to the strategies of capacity-building and empowerment.

48. Several delegations commented that the country notes did not sufficiently indicate how the proposed country programmes would relate to follow-up to the recent United Nations global conferences. A delegation welcomed the critical support by UNICEF to child rights and said that UNICEF should not reduce its support to child survival in Africa, as the achievement of the goals of the World Summit for Children would be jeopardized without support from UNICEF at the country level. One speaker said that many country notes did not reflect in their strategies adequate linkages with UNICEF global policies related to health, education and water and environmental sanitation. In the same context, a delegation remarked that the country notes did not sufficiently reflect the ways in which the proposed strategy was a change from the past strategy. Some delegations stated that the country notes did not adequately address the prevention of HIV/AIDS, including links with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). Other delegations expressed concern about the lack of reference to follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), especially with respect to women's reproductive health. However, one delegation expressed concern that traditional aspects of UNICEF cooperation in health and education services were not sufficiently developed in many country notes.

49. The Acting Deputy Executive Director, Programmes, said that the UNICEF response to HIV/AIDS was an important part of several country notes, for example in Malawi, Namibia and Zambia, countries in East Asia and in subregional initiatives such as the Mekong Initiative. Also, UNICEF had strengthened its capacity in the West and Central Africa region with the appointment of a regional adviser on HIV/AIDS and reproductive health.

50. A number of delegations said that the consultation process during the preparation of the country notes did not sufficiently involve their bilateral aid agencies or other donor groups, although in some instances the process had been satisfactory. One delegation stated that there were instances in which not even the recipient Government had been fully involved, adding that the observation was not meant to be too critical but was offered as advice. Another delegation, however, assessed the quality of consultation at the country level as improving. One speaker stated that the country notes should explain how UNICEF and his country's bilateral aid programme were related in specific countries. Two delegations suggested that the country notes have a fuller description of the consultation process.

51. The Acting Deputy Executive Director, Programmes, said that since the Executive Board had adopted decision 1995/8 in January 1995, there had not been much time to expand opportunities for participation as many of the country programme preparation exercises were well under way at that time. However, recipient Governments were receptive to the new preparation process, and feedback from UNICEF country offices indicated that there had been a rich variety of experiences in improving the participatory aspect of the process. For example, there had been substantial participation by local governments in 23 countries, local NGOs had participated in 30 exercises and all the country exercises had involved the resident coordinator and other United Nations agencies. In many instances, a large number of donor partners, both multilateral and bilateral, had participated either through their bilateral donor agencies or their diplomatic missions, but the levels of participation had not been uniform. It appeared to be the case that the content of the country notes focused more on programme strategy content than the process of participation in preparation of the programme strategy. In the future, the country notes would address the participation process more consistently.

52. In considering the extent to which the mix and weight of strategies were satisfactory, a delegation stated that the role of the Executive Board was to ensure that the process of strategic planning and consultation had taken place at the country level with the Government and other donor partners, and to assure that the country note reflected consistency in the application of UNICEF programme policies. There were indications in the country notes that a shift towards a more strategic focus was taking place. However, there was considerable discrepancy among the country notes as to the extent to which strategic choices were emerging. Moreover, the application of the strategies of service delivery, capacity-building and empowerment were not yet consistently presented in the country notes. As a whole, the country notes needed to show more clearly the strategic mix of strategies by using the terminology of the multi-donor evaluation more consistently. The country note was a means by which the UNICEF country office would demonstrate its accountability in the application of UNICEF policies, which was an important part of the management excellence initiative. A second delegation identified the most important improvements needed in the country notes as evidence of a clear relationship with the Government's development plan and with the activities of other donors; a clear thematic and geographical focus; a description of changes in approach to strategies between the previous and proposed programmes; a description of a realistic relationship between the scope of programme objectives and the level of proposed resources; and a clear explanation of the mix and weight of strategies. Another delegation commended the generally stronger focus on capacity-building, empowerment and advocacy, but said that in some cases there were weak explanations of how the strategies would be implemented.

Africa

53. The Executive Board had before it country notes for Comoros, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Sao Tome and Principe, South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia in the Eastern and Southern African region (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.1-E/ICEF/1996/P/L.8); and the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Guinea, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo in the West and Central African region (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.9-E/ICEF/1996/P/L.15). Introductory statements were made by the Regional Directors for Eastern and Southern Africa and for West and Central Africa.

54. There were several general comments on the country notes for Africa. One speaker said that the guidelines resulting from major United Nations conferences had not been followed, and that UNICEF commitments to UNAIDS should be reflected in country programme strategies. One speaker underlined the need to see Africa as a whole without separating the continent into geographic regions; UNICEF needed a strategy for resource mobilization for Africa as a whole and for the least developed and poorest countries within Africa. There was a need to identify the priority countries in Africa, possibly through regional discussions. A delegation stated that African countries had many needs and that strategies for meeting those needs would vary according to the situation and priorities of each country. Comparisons between different countries were not appropriate, as countries had different priorities. The financial resources projected in the country notes were ambitious; some countries needed supplementary funds more than others, but programming was difficult when there was no assurance of securing the funds needed. In countries that were relatively well-off, the use of private sector fund-raising was a good option. Monitoring and evaluation should be included in all country notes. One delegation wondered about the need, on the one hand, to develop a more convergent approach in policies in support of the empowerment of basic communities and the decentralization of the management processes and, on the other hand, to enhance more effectively the value of intervention by non-State partners (NGOs, religious communities, decentralized authorities). The same delegation emphasized the importance of a more qualitative approach in activities, in view of the uncertain reliability of statistics in many countries, and drew attention to the importance of the support given by UNICEF to the implementation of the Bamako Initiative.

55. On the Comoros country note, one delegation said that the country note described a sectoral more than a strategic approach. Another delegation expressed concern about the high population growth rate in the Comoros and questioned the prospects for sustainable growth in the coming five years. The delegation asked how UNICEF would collaborate with UNFPA to tackle the problem.

56. One delegation said that the objectives set out in the country note for Lesotho were overly ambitious in the context of the five-year time-frame. The country note did not include a monitoring and evaluation framework, which should be included in the country programme. Another delegation endorsed the thrust of the strategy, but stressed the need for closer coordination with other international agencies and donors. The speaker asked how the proposed programme would fit into the sectoral investment programmes that were being considered for development in Lesotho and how the proposed country strategy fit with them.

57. One delegation supported the emphasis of the Malawi country programme on raising awareness at the community level and recommended investing in community participation within the changing political environment. The speaker said that a monitoring and evaluation framework should be included in the country programme. Another delegation said that although the country note presented a good strategic mix, the linkages between the strategies and proposed interventions, as well as between the interventions and past and present budgets, were not sufficiently clear. The speaker asked specifically what capacity-building and empowerment entailed, and also questioned whether

UNICEF had a comparative advantage in supporting a strategy for women's economic empowerment. A third delegation indicated that its mission in Malawi reported that existing UNICEF support to such areas as AIDS, health and nutrition was effective and important and should be maintained. UNICEF should limit its new initiatives and concentrate on areas of comparative advantage, leaving new areas to other international agencies. The programme needed to adopt a more realistic view of the capacity of the Ministry of Health to deliver essential services. There seemed to have been inadequate consultation with donors on the development of the new programme. Speaking on a point of order, the representative of a group of States said that the political undertones of one speaker were unacceptable.

58. On the Namibia country note, a delegation said that the programme strategies were not linked clearly enough to the objectives, nor were the programme components adequately linked to the strategies. In addition, the objectives appeared too ambitious for the five-year time-frame. Provision should be made for monitoring and evaluation in the programme. There should be a greater effort to "cross-link" the various programme components in the CPR and the Government's budgetary plans and allocations for programme areas should be described. Another delegation said that the emphasis on capacity-building, institutional support and child rights was promising, but recommended greater prioritization through a smaller set of interventions. UNICEF should plan its support at the central level carefully with the Government and should identify government contributions to the programme. UNICEF should adopt the "logical framework analysis" technique for planning being used by donors in Namibia. Another delegation said that UNICEF should emphasize support for measures to reduce the high rate of teenage pregnancy, a factor contributing to the high school drop-out rate among adolescent girls.

59. On the country note for Sao Tome and Principe, a delegation said that key partners should be sensitized on the importance of improving the quality of social service provision, especially in the areas of health and basic education.

60. Several delegations commended the strategic mix of the country note for South Africa and said that the note provided a very clear strategy, with a strong definition of the UNICEF role and an appropriate set of interventions which took into account South Africa's own plans. The country note was well prepared and should be seen as an example. The inclusion of capacity-building work at the provincial level, as well as the existence of a unified policy on early childhood development, were seen as positive elements. It was said that a monitoring and evaluation framework needed to be developed. Another delegation said that the partnership with the National Children's Rights Committee should have been mentioned in the country note and credit given to other partners. The lessons learned section should have been more specific, and the country note should focus on fewer areas, such as the quality of basic education, support to children in especially difficult circumstances and capacity-building at central and local levels. Another delegation called for close coordination with other donors and also questioned the consistency of such "vertical" approaches as micronutrient programmes with the wider approach to improvement of primary health care (PHC). A speaker expressed doubts about the proposed strategy, saying that national priorities were not yet fully defined, and that there was a danger of duplication and overlap among donors because of the transition. The five-year programme framework might be too extensive at this stage, and a bridging programme might be preferable.

61. Concerning the country note for the United Republic of Tanzania, one delegation welcomed the strong and appropriate focus on capacity-building at the local government level, and also on social sector reform and donor collaboration. However, the country note did not illustrate policies and lacked adequate descriptions of how strategies would be put into practice. Another delegation asked what would be the indicators of achievement used to measure the effectiveness of various forms of advocacy, e.g., for the "20/20"

approach. The speaker also questioned the extent of the shift away from direct support to service delivery given the state of the public health sector in the country. Another speaker supported the emphasis in the country note on the UNICEF role in capacity-building and empowerment.

62. Several delegations welcomed the strategic mix of the country note for Zambia. One delegation praised the process and content of the situation analysis. A second delegation, however, requested that the Government be sensitized to renew its commitment to PHC, education and agricultural reform. Another delegation agreed with the strategic mix and the emphasis on capacity-building and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, but called for a clearer description of how strategies would be put into practice and how sustainability would be achieved. Another delegation indicated that the process of discussion with partners at the country level should continue in the coming months, prior to submission of the CPR. Several other delegations noted the strong emphasis on health and the good description of the health programme strategy. These delegations, however, expressed concern that the ongoing sectoral policy reforms in health and the coalition of donor partners supporting them, including UNICEF, were not mentioned in the note. Also mentioned was the lack of discussion on Zambian policy and budget allocations, which should be linked to the country programme strategies to ensure ownership. The same delegation said that UNICEF seemed to do things alone, and that references to collaboration sounded like activities already undertaken. There was a call for a description of the UNICEF programme strategy to be related to Zambia's national plans in each sector. One delegation said that the programme should prioritize to a greater extent and that objectives seemed to be overly ambitious with regard to supplementary funding targets. Another delegation particularly praised the ongoing work by UNICEF in the area of research and information, e.g., on the issue of girls' education.

63. One speaker said that the UNICEF emphasis on educational policy development in the Central African Republic should be linked to the practical aspects of implementation. The objective of reducing the student/teacher ratio might not be realistic given the current economic situation and the fact that the majority of parents were too poor to pay for schooling.

64. A delegation noted UNICEF plans to support social policy reform in key social sectors in Côte d'Ivoire, but asked what UNICEF was doing to reinforce collaboration with key donors in social sector reform.

65. Another delegation said that the new programme in Gabon provided an opportunity to sensitize other key donors to the need for policy development, especially in the health and education sectors.

66. The critical importance of basic education in the UNICEF programme in Guinea was cited by one speaker, who expressed the hope that an attempt would be made to establish a link between basic and technical education. The speaker also stressed the importance of dialogue with civil society, which was an essential element of strategies for sustainable human development and community empowerment. The delegation asked to be informed of steps taken by UNICEF to ensure and strengthen such a dialogue.

67. One delegation stressed that UNICEF and other agencies should ensure that vaccines were supplied to meet children's needs in Nigeria. The crisis in vaccine procurement had led to a decline in the availability of vaccines in several areas. The UNICEF role in measles immunization in countries affected by emergencies had shown that regular development activities, especially for health, could mitigate the effects of disasters. The maintenance of basic services was important in Nigeria.

68. A delegation asked for more information on donor coordination meetings in Senegal and said that it was important for the UNICEF team there to share its experience by participating more actively in such meetings. The

representative of Senegal spoke in support of the country note, which he said was the result of a long and painstaking process involving close cooperation among the Government, UNICEF, other United Nations agencies, NGOs and other parts of civil society. The note incorporated lessons from the mid-term review. The programme would contribute to the achievement of the World Summit for Children goals and implementation of the resolutions of ICPD and the Fourth World Conference on Women.

The Americas and the Caribbean

69. The Executive Board had before it 12 country notes, for Argentina, Belize, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panama and Uruguay (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.16-E/ICEF/1996/P/L.27). In a brief overview, the Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean outlined the region's economic, political and social situation; progress towards the mid-decade goals and goals for the decade; cooperation with other organizations; and programme trends.

70. Many delegations thanked the regional director for her presentation and suggested that a diagram she had prepared on the consultation process be a model for reporting to the Executive Board on this issue.

71. In general comments on the region, various delegations highlighted the significant improvement in child health indicators that had benefited from UNICEF support and, in contrast, such continuing problems as growing poverty, increased violence and violation of children's rights, in particular those of indigenous populations. The need for improved access to quality education also was noted. All delegations addressing the issue expressed appreciation for the increased emphasis given to children's and women's rights and urged UNICEF to increase its efforts in this area, including the situation of children in difficult circumstances and violence against children and women. Most delegations expressed concern about the high maternal mortality rates (MMRs) in the region and indicated that this problem requires special attention by Governments and UNICEF in line with the safe motherhood initiative, the UNICEF health policy and follow-up to ICPD and the Fourth World Conference on Women. Several delegations noted the need for increased emphasis on reproductive health, particularly in Central America. Many delegations urged UNICEF to address the critical needs of HIV/AIDS-related problems and their impact on children. A number of delegations said that explicit goals, measurable objectives and criteria for sustainability were lacking in a number of country notes.

72. Several delegations said that the levels of supplementary funding were overly optimistic. A number of delegations said that it would be useful to have a better understanding of the criteria for establishing the supplementary funding levels, which seemed high. One speaker welcomed the strategic and catalytic role of UNICEF, including its Greeting Card and related Operations and active fund-raising within the private sector as a strategy for mobilizing resources within countries.

73. One delegation expressed satisfaction with the general direction of the country programme for Belize and recommended further concentration and streamlining of interventions where feasible. A speaker indicated that the country note should express the strategic choices using the nomenclature of the multi-donor evaluation, and suggested that gender sensitivity and monitoring should be expressed at the level of activities rather than strategies.

74. In referring to the national context of Costa Rica, a delegation noted the many advances in the country, but cautioned that sustainability was an issue and referred to the decline in the quality of education. The pioneering initiative to establish the Office of an Ombudsman for Children was commended,

and it was noted that this experience should be shared with other countries. Good coordination between the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) in Costa Rica also was noted. One delegation said that UNICEF should consider its capacity in the field and asked how it planned to carry out activities indicated in the country note.

75. A delegation stressed the importance of monitoring the impact of economic changes on the situation of children and women in Cuba, specifically with regard to health and education. The speaker also questioned whether the goals described in the country note were realistic in view of the limited resources available to the programme. Another speaker said that the country note gave a clear indication and reasoning for the strategy mix for Cuba and explicitly endorsed the country note. This delegation also expressed concern about the decline in the health of children and women as a result of economic constraints.

76. A few delegations said that the programme for the Dominican Republic was ambitious given the limited resources available. One delegation expressed satisfaction that the problem of violence against women was addressed and asked if maternal mortality was given sufficient attention in light of the country's extraordinarily high MMR. The same delegation noted the high number of children in especially difficult circumstances (1.8 million) and suggested that greater priority be given to this problem.

77. Concerning the country note for El Salvador, a number of delegations recommended that greater priority be given to women's reproductive health. One delegation asked for clarification as to the criteria for the selection of the 41 priority municipalities identified, saying that there should be close coordination with other partners working in these areas. In addition, close consultations with other bilateral and multilateral partners was needed in the finalization of the country programme in order to avoid duplication. Also cited was the need for indicators to monitor the success of the programme. A delegation recommend that the monitoring systems referred to in the country note be integrated into existing systems.

78. Various delegations said that it was not yet possible to identify how the proposed objectives for Guatemala would be achieved or what indicators had been identified to monitor achievements expected at the end of the programme of cooperation. One speaker noted with concern the limited emphasis given to the impact of violence on children and suggested that more attention be paid to indigenous education and the situation of children in especially difficult circumstances. Another delegation emphasized the importance of sustainability, given the weakness of institutions in Guatemala. Also noted was the importance of coordination between different sectors of society and projects seeking consensus between various sectors. A number of delegations expressed interest in increased dialogue in the field during the remainder of the programme preparation process.

79. Several delegations noted with satisfaction the emphasis placed on the rights of children and women in Nicaragua. However, one speaker said that greater attention should be given to adolescent girls and violence against women. The country note's focus on poverty was commended by another speaker, who asked whether a poverty reduction focus was consistent with the national context of privatization and with considerations of cost-recovery. A number of delegations noted discrepancies between the data on poverty and the social indicators presented in the situation analysis, and data from other sources such as IDB, UNDP and the World Bank, which indicated that the situation was more serious than was depicted in the country note. Various delegations described the proposed strategy mix as well balanced. One delegation emphasized the importance of capacity-building and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of institutions. A number of delegations said that the programme was ambitious. One speaker saw the need for further prioritization and indicated that past UNICEF experience should help to identify areas where

UNICEF had comparative advantages. The country note should be more problem-oriented and indicate more clearly how UNICEF planned to do what it proposed. Another delegation noted the importance of indicators to measure progress. A number of delegations asked if enough attention was being given to reproductive health activities as reflected in the UNICEF health strategy. One delegation asked why the note emphasized support for the early grades of primary school, and another speaker suggested a more comprehensive approach to education. The gains in water supply coverage were noted by one delegation, which said that similar gains had yet to be achieved for sanitation and asked what was being proposed to improve this situation. It was stated that technical coordination between partners, including bilateral assistance programmes, should be recognized, as should collaboration with subregional institutions and programmes.

80. A number of delegations commented favourably on the thrust and strategic mix proposed in the country note for Panama. Speakers expressed satisfaction with the increased focus on the education of children and indigenous communities. Another speaker noted favourably the increased mobilization of resources.

81. One delegation said that the country note for Uruguay did not make substantial comments on gender issues and women's rights. The reference to "a gender perspective [promoting] specific activities to empower girls and women" was not convincing. Another delegation suggested that more could have been learned from lessons from the previous cooperation period. UNICEF cooperation should take into consideration the country's technological advancements. Child protection was important, but attention also should be paid to equal access to education and equal opportunities. Another speaker recognized the importance of child protection, but asked whether it was overemphasized in the country note. The country had experienced a recession, with 24 per cent of the urban and 48 per cent of the rural population now in poverty, and infant mortality had increased. The speaker asked if the change of focus away from health and education was justified and said he observed a change in thrust from support to projects with a tangible and clear impact to that of a specialized child consultancy. While recognizing the appropriateness of this role, he questioned whether it should be the exclusive role of UNICEF in the country.

Asia

82. The Executive Board had before it country notes for Malaysia, Mongolia and the Pacific Island countries in the East Asia and the Pacific region (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.28-E/ICEF/1996/P/L.30); and Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka in the South Asia region (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.31-E/ICEF/1996/P/L.33). The country notes were introduced by the Regional Directors for East Asia and the Pacific and for South Asia.

83. Several delegations endorsed the country notes for East Asia and the Pacific, saying that they were in line with the commitments made at the regional consultation on mid-decade goals held in 1995 in Hanoi, Viet Nam, and responded to the socio-economic developments of the region and needs of children. One delegation highlighted the strong cooperation between UNICEF and the countries of the region. Another speaker said that as a result of industrialization in the region, the number of women in the labour force had increased, so there was less parental time for child-rearing. Consequently, indicators should be developed for monitoring and reporting on implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, especially in countries such as Malaysia. Also, programmes should include components on parental guidance and HIV/AIDS.

84. One delegation said that the country notes had some omissions, including insufficient attention to UNICEF contributions and achievements in making the Pacific polio-free. Those efforts would become increasingly important as the

initiative moved to South Asia and Africa. The speaker expressed the hope that UNICEF work in the polio programme would not wane but instead gain momentum through collaboration and coordination with WHO and NGOs. In addition, more attention should be given in the country notes to the needs of forgotten minorities, and even majorities in some countries. The speaker said that the country notes had not addressed HIV/AIDS and reproductive health in line with strategies adopted by the Executive Board, and asked if this was because the health strategy had not yet been implemented. The issue of high supplementary funding levels also was raised. Although the supplementary funding component in Asia was only twice that of general resources, as compared with Latin America, where it was as much as five times the general resources level, there was concern about the viability of core programmes if the anticipated supplementary funding was not forthcoming.

85. Regarding its own country note, the delegation of Mongolia reviewed its national situation and stressed the Government's priority for children's issues. Because Mongolia was grappling with the effects of transition to a market economy, the Government's policy was to protect the most vulnerable segments of society, especially children and women, from any adverse impact of the transition. The Government and civil society had developed a plan to protect children along the lines of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The country note had been prepared in full cooperation with the Government, other United Nations agencies and multilateral and bilateral donors, and was in accordance with the national programme of action and the poverty alleviation programme.

86. A delegation expressed satisfaction at the strong reflection of the Government's social sector policies in the country note for Bhutan. Another delegation was impressed by the clarity of the proposed strategy and said that it could be a model for other countries. The speaker welcomed the emphasis on quality in education and the focus on community schools and non-formal education. She also agreed with the strong emphasis given to gender-sensitive planning, but found it unfortunate that this was not translated into extra attention to women's health issues. The lack of attention to the growing problem of HIV/AIDS was of some concern. Another delegation said that more attention should be paid to the sectoral support approach, with better coordination among donors and better integration of their support to government sectoral programmes. Donors should move towards providing financial and technical assistance to government programmes instead of setting up their own activities and spreading resources in separate and dispersed projects. The country note clearly dealt with the strategic mix, but, as with other countries, it was difficult to determine how the effectiveness of the strategy mix could be assessed. The delegation asked how the secretariat intended to monitor the effect of changes in strategy and results of the mix of strategies. Better indicators were needed and one suggestion would be to have those issues elaborated in the CPR. The trends in the types of assistance UNICEF provided could be analysed and the results compared with previous programmes. One delegation invited the secretariat to comment on the discrepancy between the MMR figures in the country note (380 per 100,000 live births) and the figure given in The Progress of Nations (1,310 per 100,000 live births). The Regional Director for South Asia explained that for technical reasons, data on MMR were extremely unreliable for many countries, and in the case of Bhutan, the country note had used the figures from a recent survey, while The Progress of Nations still used the officially accepted figure of several years ago.

87. On the country note for Nepal, a number of delegations said that the general thrust of the proposed strategies was appropriate and in line with the country's main problems. One delegation commended the country note for its well-balanced strategy, appropriate programme concentration and multisectoral and multi-partner approach. However, another delegation found the country note in general to be less focused than some others and said that while past experience called for avoiding the proliferation of projects as specifically

mentioned in the note, this was not actually reflected in the note itself. UNICEF seemed to want to work in too many areas and might not be, for example, the best placed agency to deal with women's credit schemes. A delegation saw issues of health and gender inequality as crucial in Nepal, as the note reflected, but according to its own assessment of the country situation, potential obstacles to achieving programme objectives were a lack of female staff at all levels and the low level of performance of community volunteers. There was a need for a drastic change in the top-down training model currently implemented and the establishment of effective monitoring of the impact of training. There also should be a reference to HIV/AIDS in the proposed programme. A delegation asked the secretariat to comment on declining coverage of Nepal's immunization programme and how this would be taken into account in the country programme. The regional director said that the country office was helping the Government to resolve the problem, which had been caused mainly by major government staffing changes in the country. Several delegations referred to the process of consultation with donors. One speaker said that while there was good collaboration between UNICEF and some of the United Nations agencies, the necessary coordination mechanisms had not been set up at the country level. Coordination with and among bilateral agencies was inadequate, with each agency acting in accordance with its own priorities. Another delegation called for better coordination efforts to ensure efficient use of the many donor inputs and programmes under way in Nepal. In agreeing with the general intent of the strategy, one delegation was more concerned about how the strategy would be implemented. The country note referred to a multisectoral approach and the UNICEF office intended to organize itself on a thematic basis; the Government, however, would still operate sectorally, as would other agencies such as UNDP and UNFPA.

88. Concerning the country note for Sri Lanka, one delegation commended the overall strategy presented in the note, which clearly reflected the interest of UNICEF in child survival and development, and welcomed the emphasis on gender issues. However, the note gave rise to a few concerns: more attention should be paid to the impact of the armed conflict on women and children; the strategy should indicate how the programme would deal with recent developments in the country; the complementarity of UNICEF with other organizations, whether related to emergency activities or in general, should be indicated; and more emphasis should be placed on the problems of water and sanitation, which were clearly identified as priorities by the Government of Sri Lanka. The secretariat said that in the next programme cycle, UNICEF would continue to support the population affected by armed conflict, particularly women and children, using $4.5 million for the provision of drinking water, sanitation, health, nutrition, education for conflict resolution and community-based rehabilitation of traumatized children. Support to water and sanitation was an integral part of the strategy to improve the nutritional status of the targeted population in Sri Lanka. Another delegation said that progress in the area of child survival and development, e.g., PHC, allowed UNICEF support to shift towards promoting the protection of children's rights and participation. A delegation said that the current country programme for 1992-1996 had not been fully implemented, perhaps because of overly ambitious goals; the goals set in the proposed programme were less ambitious, with more focus on malnutrition and violence against children. Because of special difficulties in Sri Lanka, UNICEF should intensify support for the Government's efforts in tackling issues related to nutrition and the protection of children, especially those affected by armed conflict.

Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States

89. The Executive Board had before it country notes for the Republic of Moldova and Turkey (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.34 and E/ICEF/1995/P/L.35), which were introduced by the Acting Regional Director. Representatives of both countries expressed appreciation for the country notes and for the UNICEF programmes of cooperation in their countries.

Middle East and North Africa

90. The Executive Board had before it country notes for Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, the Sudan and Tunisia (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.36-E/ICEF/1996/P/L.40), which were introduced by the Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa.

91. On the country note for Tunisia, a delegation said that the UNICEF approach to dealing with women's and children's problems was realistic, but the balance between general resources and supplementary funding needed to be reviewed and justified. Another delegation said that the budget was well prepared and referred particularly to the balance between general resources and supplementary funding. A delegation commended the emphasis placed on education and underlined the importance of education for the development of children. The representative of Tunisia said that UNICEF worked well in cooperation with existing government services and affirmed his Government's commitment to the well-being of children. Some 60 per cent of the government budget was allocated to health, education and social development. Tunisia had ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child and adopted a law for the development and the protection of children. Education was obligatory and free for children from ages 6 to 16 years, as were health services.

92. One delegation said that the country note for Morocco emphasized rural areas and provided realistic views of health care and education in those areas. It was noteworthy that the country note focused on high illiteracy rates, child mortality, implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and expansion of education. Priority should be given to education and social services in rural and semi-rural areas and to the promotion of girls, while social services, community action and empowerment of civil society should be strengthened. It was regrettable that coordination with other agencies did not include WHO. Implementation of the AIDS programme was not mentioned. In addition, the balance between general resources and additional funds should be revised. Another delegation said that the country note should refer to Morocco's excellent vaccine independence initiative and the sustainable progress made. The programme was encouraging to donors, some of whom had already supported the initiative; UNICEF should pursue collaboration with donors.

93. One delegation said that the country note for Lebanon was not ambitious enough and that UNICEF should resume its leading role in the country. Lebanon was undergoing post-emergency rehabilitation, which justified increased funding. The note did not provide an explanation for the lack of funds mobilized by UNICEF every year; additional funding needs should be described in the document and UNICEF should be more active in securing funds. Another speaker said that the programme strategy focused on capacity-building in health, education, children in especially difficult circumstances and collaboration with NGOs. Of note were the multisectoral approach and area-focused programmes, with an emphasis on high-risk areas, underserved rural areas, conflict areas and urban slums. Special attention should be given to Palestinian children. Finally, the Committee on the Rights of the Child would review the report of the Government of Lebanon in May 1996, and its conclusions should be reflected in the CPR, following discussions with the Government. Another delegation suggested that UNICEF use Lebanon as a case study on post-crisis development assistance. The speaker underlined the close relationship and coordination among the Government, UNICEF and other operational agencies.

94. Several delegations congratulated Oman on its progress towards the mid-decade goals and its graduation from the ranks of recipient countries. A delegation supported concluding the country programme by the year 2000 or sooner. Another requested that the CPR for Oman give a clearer picture of what would happen after UNICEF left Oman and of what type of support UNICEF would provide to the new national high-level body for children that would be created.

95. Concerning the country note for the Sudan, a delegation said that owing to the lack of supplementary funding contributions for the humanitarian programme in 1995, general resources had been used to cover its costs. There were several queries about the amount of general resources involved and the extent to which this type of transfer be repeated in the near future; and about whether the amount of $25 million in supplementary funding proposed in the country note was realistic, given the shortage of supplementary funding contributions for the previous country programme. In addition, because the country note indicated that there was a general lack of data regarding children and women, there was a need to conduct a solid quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the conditions of children. The proposed country programme was too ambitious in a number of fields. In view of the shortage of funds, UNICEF should better prioritize the activities and make the programme more targeted. Such prioritization should not only be by sector of assistance, but also by recipient community. Another speaker stated that as the situation of children in the country continued to be critical, UNICEF should concentrate on child protection issues. There was close cooperation between UNICEF and the Government, and the country note had obviously been carefully considered with the Government. In view of the planned introduction of compulsory education, UNICEF should exercise caution in cooperating with the Government in the education sector. The representative of the Sudan reaffirmed the Government's commitment to the rights of the child, to the education of girls and to providing basic services for children, including vaccination. Education would become compulsory next year, and UNICEF support to that sector would be appreciated. The Government, in collaboration with all United Nations agencies including UNICEF, had prepared a country strategy note, which was about to be finalized. UNICEF should build on the decentralized structure of the Government and promote sustainability and effectiveness. The Government would like to see a shift from an emergency to a rehabilitation/development type of programme to ensure sustainability of services for children.

96. The representative of Iraq expressed his gratitude to UNICEF for its humanitarian work in alleviating the sufferings of children in the country. Despite the steep decline in the conditions of children and women, UNICEF resources for Iraq had declined considerably from $52 million in 1993 to $13.9 million in 1995. Although he understood the financial and other limitations faced by UNICEF, he expressed the hope that UNICEF would be able to commit more resources to help more Iraqi children. The conditions of children in Iraq would improve when the sanctions were lifted, and Iraq then would not need UNICEF assistance. Another speaker said that until five or six years ago, children had enjoyed good health in Iraq, but now malnutrition was prevalent. The delegation fully supported more material and technical assistance to Iraq. Another delegation expressed concern about the decrease in the budget and asked if the large reduction in resources was peculiar to Iraq or was more symptomatic.

97. The Executive Director said that the reduction in general resources was applicable not only to Iraq. Currently, UNICEF was facing budgetary constraints, as were other United Nations agencies. There was not a significant decrease in the UNICEF programme in Iraq, but after a period of a complex and highly visible emergency, donor funding for Iraq had become less generous. General resources had remained stable, but supplementary funding had declined. The basic programmes were still ensured and the reduction was not dramatic.

Conclusion

98. The Executive Board took note of the comments made by delegations during the debate, which the secretariat would share with the Governments concerned. The President reminded the Executive Board that in accordance with the procedure agreed upon, the country notes would be developed into full CPRs and presented to the Executive Board at its third regular session of 1996 for

approval on a "no objection" basis. Delegations with comments on the CPRs would have to submit them in writing to the secretariat or the "no objection" approval would take place.

D. Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women

99. The Executive Board had before it a report on UNICEF follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women (E/ICEF/1996/3 and Corr.1), which was introduced by the Executive Director.

100. Board members generally endorsed the UNICEF proposals for follow-up to the Beijing Conference and agreed with the three priority areas identified in the paper: girls' education; adolescent girls' and women's health; and children's and women's rights. Delegations said that the rights and well-being of children were closely linked to the rights and status of women and that the Beijing Platform for Action had accorded importance to the girl child. Speakers commended UNICEF advocacy efforts during the preparatory work and at the Conference itself. However, one delegation stressed that the ultimate mission of UNICEF is to promote the well-being of children and that it is as a means to that end that UNICEF plays an advocacy role with regard to the promotion of the rights of women, including the girl child.

101. A number of delegations agreed on giving priority attention to girls' education and urged that concrete actions be worked out for overcoming the obstacles faced by girls. Speakers pointed out the connection between girls' education and poverty alleviation and the need for new approaches for tackling this area. Two delegations called for specific actions to retain girls in school. The secretariat said that major initiatives were under way in Africa with funding support from the Canadian International Development Agency and the Government of Norway. Successful interventions in Asia were being studied, and the lessons learned were being applied in the design and implementation of programmes for girls' education.

102. A few delegations expressed concern about the implications of the priority given to adolescent girls' health in relation to the primary focus of UNICEF on child health. One delegation stated that UNICEF should not detract from its broad focus on the health, nutrition and education of girls in order to give priority to reproductive health services for adolescents, which was the mandate of such other United Nations agencies as UNFPA and WHO. UNICEF should continue to address the needs of younger pre-adolescent girls. On the other hand, some delegations appreciated the attention to this age-group and urged that it be even more focused. The secretariat clarified that the health of younger girls and children would continue to be of primary concern in the work of UNICEF. However, within the life cycle perspective, the health needs of adolescent girls emerged as a critical area for action because of the rising incidence of teenage pregnancy and HIV/AIDS. In response to concerns expressed about the role of UNICEF in the provision of reproductive health services, the Acting Deputy Executive Director, Programmes, clarified that the UNICEF position in this regard was consistent with the policy on the UNICEF health strategy approved by the Executive Board in 1995 (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1, decision 1995/28). Family planning and reproductive health services to which UNICEF might provide support included essential obstetric care, planning of safe delivery, prenatal care, prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases, and the provision of information, education and communication on family planning and reproductive health.

103. Several speakers commended the renewed emphasis on women's rights and urged UNICEF involvement in the ratification and implementation of both the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. One delegation stated that actions should address the removal of reservations made by countries in ratifying the latter Convention, and a few delegations cautioned against giving it equal

importance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The secretariat replied that there was growing recognition of both Conventions as joint instruments for achieving the goals for children and women in UNICEF country programmes. In fact, 7 of the 40 country notes submitted to the Board had explicitly used the two Conventions as the framework for identifying objectives and developing strategies.

104. Some speakers said that the gender-specific needs of women and girls in emergency situations had to be addressed. Many delegations urged that such interventions include health, nutrition, education and the protection of women and girls. Violence against women and girls, sexual abuse and exploitation were identified as areas for action. Delegations drew attention to the issue of harmful traditional practices, especially female genital mutilation, which they said was both a violation of human rights and a health hazard, with harmful physical and psychological effects on girls and women. The secretariat responded that detailed programme guidelines had been prepared for action at the country level using lessons learned from extensive ongoing programmes to end this practice in Burkina Faso and the Sudan.

105. One speaker said that in some countries, the situation and position of men and boys was emerging as an area for concern. Women had attained increasingly higher status, thus marginalizing men, and the incidence of violence against women and girls was rising. Other delegations spoke about the role of men in families, the redefinition of gender roles and greater sharing of responsibilities. The secretariat said that this was a relatively new area for UNICEF. Based on initiatives in the Caribbean and Viet Nam, a recent staff seminar had developed programme strategies to address these issues in a systematic manner.

106. A number of delegations spoke about the importance of a gender perspective in development programmes. The mainstreaming of gender across all programmes was vital and a prerequisite to the follow-up of the Beijing Platform for Action. A speaker said that there was a need for an institutional strategy, with mechanisms for gender training, integrating gender perspectives and accountability. The secretariat said that through the capacity-building programme for gender, by the end of 1995, more than 235 workshops had been organized at regional and country levels through which some 1,200 UNICEF staff and 7,800 counterparts had been oriented to gender concepts and the women's equality and empowerment framework. The global network of external gender resource persons has been expanded to 50 experts, and overall the capacity-building efforts had begun to yield dividends. A gender analysis of the country notes being presented to the Board showed that of 40 country notes, the gender profile of 17 emerged as high, 13 as medium and 10 as needing improvement. Further, age and gender disaggregation and analysis increasingly were essential components of all stages of country programmes, starting with the situation analysis.

107. Several delegations expressed appreciation to UNICEF for its commitment to double its resources for girls' education, and urged that resources be committed for follow-up to other areas of the Beijing Platform for Action. The issues of inter-agency collaboration, overlap and duplication in follow-up efforts were raised. Speakers also pointed out the efficacy of interrelated and integrated follow-up to the recent global conferences in UNICEF country programmes. The secretariat said that follow-up would be undertaken in an integrated manner. With regard to the Platform for Action of the Beijing Conference, the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women would submit a draft system-wide medium-term plan to the Commission on the Status of Women at its session in March 1996. UNICEF had contributed to its preparation. (See the annex, decision 1996/3, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

E. The fiftieth anniversary of UNICEF

108. The Executive Board had before it a report on the fiftieth anniversary of UNICEF (E/ICEF/1996/5), which was introduced by the Executive Director. She said that UNICEF was not planning any self-congratulatory activities, but instead would focus on resource mobilization and advocacy in connection with UNICEF priorities. All activities would take place within existing budgets as the secretariat was aware of the need not to divert programme funds. Field offices and National Committees for UNICEF had responded enthusiastically to the call for initiatives to mark the anniversary, with more than 100 countries planning activities. These included the issuance of special postage stamps, activities involving children and fund-raising opportunities. Hopefully, on 11 December, the General Assembly would dedicate a meeting to the fiftieth anniversary of UNICEF.

109. Many delegations agreed with the ideas outlined by the Executive Director. While acknowledging the need to avoid self-congratulatory messages, many said that the Executive Board should commemorate the organization's founding at some point during the annual session. Some delegations suggested that children be associated with the event and that a well-known keynote speaker be invited to address the Board. The representative of the Netherlands announced that his Government is increasing its annual contribution to general resources by $5 million. He also indicated that the Government of the Netherlands is in favour of an appropriate and lively commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary and that it has no objection to using general resources to finance the events.

110. The Executive Director replied that the secretariat would be very interested in meeting with delegations to discuss appropriate activities for the annual session. The Director of the Division of Public Affairs added that the secretariat would be able to work towards dedicating some portion of the annual session to commemorate the anniversary. Other events during the year would include the Day of the African Child (17 June), a day of reflection on the mid-decade goals (30 September), the launch of the Graça Machel study on the impact of children in war, stressing the relationship with child rights (20 November) and the actual anniversary of the founding of UNICEF (11 December). An international gathering of children had been envisaged for 20 November, but perhaps could take place at the annual session instead.

111. The Executive Board took note of the report (see the annex, decision 1996/4) and agreed to discuss the matter further at the second regular session in April.

F. Follow-up to decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council

112. The Executive Board had before it a report on follow-up to decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council at its 1995 substantive session (E/ICEF/1996/6), which was introduced by the Executive Director. She informed the Executive Board of developments that had occurred since the submission of the report and the General Assembly's triennial review of operational activities for development and subsequent adoption of resolution 50/120 of 20 December 1995.

113. Many delegations said that the reports on follow-up to decisions taken by the Council submitted to the Executive Boards of UNICEF and UNDP/UNFPA had few similarities and different formats. They recommended that the three secretariats adopt a similar format for reporting to their Boards and to the Council. Some delegations recommended that an inter-sessional consultation be convened to resolve the issue.

114. Delegations requested that UNICEF report in detail on follow-up to resolutions of the Economic and Social Council and General Assembly on the triennial policy review of operational activities for development, particularly the division of responsibilities and focus on priority areas, the establishment of executive committees in the field, common understanding and implementation of concepts on capacity-building, and support to national execution. Some delegations requested detailed information on the steps taken by UNICEF to provide candidates for resident coordinators positions. The Executive Director agreed to increase efforts in this area.

115. The Executive Board took note of the report (see the annex, decision 1996/4) and requested the secretariat to provide more detailed information on follow-up to the 1995 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council at the second regular session in April.

G. Other matters

Progress report on the audit of the Kenya country office

116. The Executive Board had before it a report on progress with regard to the audit of the Kenya country office (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.1), which was introduced by the Executive Director. She said that the office was returning to normal operations, with appropriate staffing. The report showed that as of November 1995, 21 staff had been separated, with 17 summary dismissals, and there had been 2 additional dismissals since then. While in February 1995, there had been 250 staff in the office, total staff now numbered approximately 80.

117. A delegation said that it was obvious from the report that the Board had not been informed of many events that had taken place. There should be more openness and a more detailed briefing would be appreciated, paying attention to concrete conclusions drawn for specific follow-up activities. Another speaker said that the next report should provide information about the status of the 23 fraud charges against the former staff members. The delegation supported the Executive Director in her personal involvement in the resolution of the Kenya situation and her efforts to improve the overall accountability of UNICEF. However, UNICEF should ensure that an appropriate balance was struck between control and cost-effective programme delivery when instituting the proposed reforms. Another delegation said that the report indicated how audit policies and systems were being addressed, but did not include a report on how UNICEF could use reports on over-commitments and overspending to trigger action to examine their causes, which had been requested by the Executive Board, and he asked when it could be expected. The Board also had requested the secretariat to look into criteria for eligibility for classification as NGOs and to review NGOs implementing UNICEF programmes, and he asked what progress had been made in that area.

118. The Executive Director said that the best way to provide regular ongoing information might be for the UNICEF representative in Kenya to brief donor representatives in that country. Improving efficiency meant improving the way programmes were carried out. As to using information to be pro-active, the work being done in the areas of integrated budgets and field-support systems should provide more usable information, and the work being done on accountability should be useful in general in helping to identify problems before they got out of hand. As for NGOs, she had just issued a revised model NGO agreement that was the result of a comprehensive series of consultations on how best to enter into arrangements with international and national NGOs. Responding to a request, she said copies of the agreement would be made available to delegations. The Executive Board took note of the report (see the annex, decision 1996/4).

Dissemination of documentation

119. On behalf of the nine francophone members of the Executive Board, the delegation of Romania introduced a draft decision on the dissemination of documents in working and official languages. He said that it was imperative that there be strict compliance with the rules established on languages throughout the United Nations system. The numerous issues posed by the dissemination of documentation could not be settled without insight into the various elements of each case. With four sessions per year and the obligation to disseminate documents six weeks prior to the start of each session, a rule that was clearly strengthened by General Assembly resolution 50/11 of 2 November 1995 on multilingualism, the dissemination of documents in all official languages represented a real challenge, but one which could be mastered. Resolution 50/11 mandated eliminating or at least reducing the generalized practice of issuing preliminary documents. Better organization of the work of the secretariat might make it possible to disseminate key documents for Executive Board sessions far earlier. Better structuring of priorities among various documents and a precise determination of the number of pages involved were factors in the process, together with a degree of self-discipline in managing the reports requested by the Executive Board. All those avenues could be explored and the Executive Director could report to the annual session, submitting specific and practical proposals to establish simple and effective rules on the issue. Concerning the implications to be drawn from any late production of documents, the francophone members of the Executive Board reserved the right to request that documents not disseminated according to the rules of General Assembly resolution 50/11 be postponed until the next Board session.

120. One speaker asked the secretariat and members of the Executive Board to keep in mind the time required for consultation on draft documents and their translation before specifying dates for reports being requested. Another delegation said that because the cost aspect of the issue was very important, the need to limit administrative costs should be included in the working group's programme. The draft decision was adopted by the Executive Board (see the annex, decision 1996/5, for the full text).

Documentation for future sessions of the Executive Board

121. On the recommendation of the Executive Director, the Executive Board agreed that the following reports, which had been presented annually, should be discontinued: a report on the reduction of outstanding balances through savings or cancellations and funds to cover overexpenditures on approved budgets; the review of expenditures in excess of commitments for completed projects financed by supplementary funds; and a report on the use of general resources for projects approved for supplementary funding (see the annex, decision 1996/6).

122. Also on the recommendation of the Executive Director, the Board agreed: (a) that a report on the implementation of the health strategy, originally scheduled for the second regular session of 1996, be presented to the third regular session; and (b) that a report on the optimal structure and location of GCO, originally scheduled for the annual session, be presented to the third regular session (see the annex, decision 1996/6). The latter was agreed to on the understanding that the annual GCO work plan and budget be submitted, as scheduled, to the annual session which generally had larger participation of National Committees for UNICEF.

Child protection in all countries

123. A delegation stated that in addition to the remarkable role of UNICEF in developing countries, certain other areas of concern for children were not addressed by UNICEF as they should be, as they involved a regional group that provided funds and did not receive them. The "exempt group" was always exempt

from discussion at Executive Board sessions. It was not realistic to assume that children in donor countries were absolutely free from child abuse. Since UNICEF was a universal body and the child a universal concern, her delegation requested UNICEF action in three areas of concern. First, delegations from recipient countries were forced to listen to indictments on the need to avoid child labour. But who was to take action against Governments of "exempt countries" which had no control over their private businesses? Did the multinational corporations headquartered in the "exempt group" have a policy of paying their own countries' minimum wages in the developing countries? The speaker asked UNICEF, without any diversion of resources from programme countries, to provide data on counterpart responsibility of the "exempt group". Secondly, she asked UNICEF to provide information and advocacy on cases of adoption of children from child homes in developing countries into some countries from the "exempt group". The speaker's final concern was the prevalence of child pornography all over the world. In areas such as child abuse, child prostitution and child pornography, UNICEF should find the means to inform the Executive Board of the status of children globally, including the "exempt region". Some details of the nationalities of the "clientele" of child prostitutes, if and where they existed, also should be provided.

124. Another delegation said that over 1 million children world wide were forced into the sexual market every year. This and related problems would be addressed at the World Congress Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, to be held from 27 to 31 August 1996 in Stockholm, Sweden.

125. A number of delegations shared the concerns raised by the first speaker and agreed that UNICEF should be able to provide the information, most of which should be available. One speaker suggested that the International Child Development Centre could play a role in the process. The Executive Director said that she found the discussion to be very encouraging, as the Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children applied to the whole world. UNICEF had provided some relevant information in both the State of the World's Children and The Progress of Nations, but it was difficult to find some of the information, so the secretariat would welcome any assistance available.

Draft report on internal oversight mechanisms

126. Referring to an informal presentation by the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services on a draft report of the Secretary-General on enhancing the internal oversight mechanisms in operational funds and programmes, a speaker said that the Executive Board should make provisions to discuss the draft report at a future session. Also, the draft report should be made available to delegations as soon as possible. The Executive Director said that UNICEF had just received the draft report and would confer with the other funds and programmes to ensure a coordinated response. (The draft report was subsequently distributed in all official languages to members of the Executive Board by the Executive Director.)

Farewell to Richard Jolly

127. Dr. Richard Jolly, who had served as UNICEF Deputy Executive Director, Programmes, for 14 years, addressed the Executive Board for the last time, upon his new assignment as Special Adviser to the UNDP Administrator, responsible for the preparation of the annual Human Development Report. Following his statement, in which he outlined some of the major trends and successes that occurred during his tenure at UNICEF, the Executive Director and the President, on behalf of the Board, wished him success in his new endeavour and thanked him for his service to UNICEF and the world's children.

H. Closing remarks

128. The Executive Director said that the session had been a most auspicious beginning to the fiftieth anniversary year of UNICEF. The Board had completed a full and substantive agenda, with the assistance of the President and the Vice-Presidents. The Board had provided excellent and clear guidance on a number of issues, including the mission statement, which would be disseminated to every UNICEF office and staff member around the world. The participatory process used to develop the mission statement would continue with the management excellence programme. The secretariat looked forward to organizing inter-sessional meetings and would invite members to attend staff discussions on management excellence activities. The country programming process had been strengthened by the Board's comments on country notes. The guidance provided by the Board on other issues also would be taken fully into account by the secretariat.

129. The President said that during the session, the members of the Executive Board, observers and the secretariat had exhibited a spirit of real cooperation and compromise in keeping with the Board's traditions and those of UNICEF. The mission statement adopted by the Executive Board provided a vision for the next 50 years, while the debate on country notes had demonstrated the importance of country programmes to both donor and recipient Governments. The Board's discussions on emergency operations and strategies and on follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and on decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council had proven the importance of coordination to UNICEF. The Board had made a good start in ensuring that UNICEF continued to work as closely as possible with its allies.

130. The Board concluded its work of the second regular session on 25 January, one day ahead of schedule.

Part two

SECOND REGULAR SESSION OF 1996

Held at United Nations Headquarters from 9 to 12 April 1996

I. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

A. Statements by the President and the Executive Director

131. The President, citing the ongoing reform of the United Nations system, said that UNICEF, led by the Executive Director, continued to fight for the survival, protection and development of children and for the rights of the child. He referred to the Executive Director's statement at the recent launch of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa, in which she stressed that UNICEF would work in the areas of primary health care, basic education, water supply and sanitation, and the protection and rehabilitation of children affected by war. These were the areas in which UNICEF had a comparative advantage, and other United Nations agencies would work in their own areas. He expressed the hope that the Special Initiative would become an example of the effectiveness of international cooperation through the United Nations system.

132. The Executive Director said that she recently had visited the Middle East, the Russian Federation and Central Asia. During these travels, she had been struck by four things: the wisdom and effectiveness of the country programme approach because it gave UNICEF the flexibility to respond to a fast-changing world; the magnitude of the challenges still facing children; the determination of Governments to tackle those changes; and the quality of UNICEF staff. She added that she had visited most of the industrialized nations as well and was gratified to confirm that support for UNICEF remained strong. However, it was clear that no one could take that support for granted, and UNICEF must continue to justify it on the basis of results achieved for children and the efficiency with which they were achieved.

B. Adoption of the agenda

133. The agenda of the session, as contained in document E/ICEF/1996/9, was adopted. The agenda contained the following items:

Item 1: Opening of the session: statements by the President and the Executive Director

Item 2: Adoption of the provisional agenda and timetable and organization of work

Item 3: Proposals for UNICEF cooperation and programme reviews:

- (a) Africa
    - (i) Eastern and Southern Africa
- (b) Americas and the Caribbean
- (c) Asia
    - (i) East Asia and the Pacific
    - (ii) South Asia
- (d) Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Baltic States (including a report on the UNICEF approach to the region)
- (e) Middle East and North Africa

Item 4: Mid-term country programme reviews and evaluations

Item 5: Budgetary matters:

  (a) Integrated budget for headquarters and regional offices for 1996-1997

  (b) Harmonization of budget presentations

Item 6: Progress report on the management excellence programme (MEP)

Item 7: Annual report to the Economic and Social Council (part II of the report of the Executive Director)

Item 8: Follow-up to the triennial policy review on operational activities for development

Item 9: 1996 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award

Item 10: Other matters

Item 11: Concluding remarks by the Executive Director and the President

134. In accordance with rule 50.2 and the annex of the Rules of Procedure, the Secretary of the Executive Board announced the observer delegations that had submitted credentials for he session and had advised the secretariat of the agenda items in which they had a special interest. They were (with the agenda items indicated, if any, shown in parentheses): Albania; Algeria; Armenia (3 (d), 5 (a), 8); Australia; Austria (3, 5); Bangladesh (all); Belarus; Belgium; Benin; Bolivia; Bosnia and Herzegovina (3); Bulgaria; Colombia; Costa Rica; Czech Republic; Egypt; Eritrea; Finland; Georgia (3 (d); Germany (all); Guatemala (all); Guinea; Guyana; Holy See (all); Honduras; Israel; Kazakstan (all); Kyrgyzstan; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Latvia (all); Lesotho; Lithuania; Malta (all); Mexico (3); Nepal (all); New Zealand; Nicaragua; Niger; Nigeria (5); Panama; Peru (3 (b); Philippines; Poland; Republic of Moldova; Slovakia; Spain; Swaziland; Syrian Arab Republic; The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; Tunisia; Turkmenistan; United Republic of Tanzania; Yemen; and Zimbabwe.

135. In addition, Palestine (3 (e)) and the League of Arab States had submitted credentials, as had the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); the World Food Programme; the World Health Organization (WHO); the Standing Group of the National Committees for UNICEF (5, 6, 10); the United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF (3); *Association mondiale des amis de l'enfance* (World Association of Children's Friends) (1, 2, 3, 4); International Council on Social Welfare (all); International Federation of Social Workers (3, 6); *Mouvement mondial des mères* (World Movement of Mothers) (3, 4); *Organisation mondiale pour l'éducation préscolaire* (World Organization for Early Childhood Education) (1, 3, 6, 7); Rotary International (1, 3, 6, 7, 10); and Soroptimist International (all).

II. DELIBERATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

A. Proposals for UNICEF cooperation and programme reviews

Africa

Country programme recommendations

136. The Executive Board had before it a recommendation for additional general resources for the Zambia country programme (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.44) and a "stand-alone" supplementary funding proposal for HIV/AIDS-related activities in Eastern and Southern Africa (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.45), both introduced by the Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa.

137. Several delegations commended the role of UNICEF in Zambia, especially in the area of girls' education. One speaker said that the Zambia programme focused on key interventions and was exemplary for its collaboration with bilateral donors. The speaker asked why the programme required more funds if it was so successful that it had expanded. Other delegations cited the programme's model experience in the coordination of child survival and development (CSD) efforts. Speakers expressed concern over falling resource levels and the resulting negative impact on programmes for children. A delegation stressed the need to review this tendency towards budget and staffing reductions in Africa in view of the implications for CSD. UNICEF was urged to pay greater attention to child survival priorities as well as to continuing its efforts in the areas of advocacy, CSD, basic education and grass-roots community development work. The Regional Director said that in 1995, UNICEF spent some 36 per cent of its resources on Africa and was continuing to focus resources on priority programmes.

138. A delegation asked if the request for additional general resources was in support of already approved programmes. The same speaker raised questions about table 2 of the "round-up" document (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.43 and Corr.1) and asked if the 7 per cent allocated for programme support was in addition to the programme support budget presented separately. The Regional Director said that UNICEF, through the integrated budget system, was taking steps to address the issue of programme support costs and programme allocations and hoped in future to avoid this problem.

139. Other delegations expressed concerns about supplementary funding allocations and requested further discussions at a future session on the criteria for the allocation of resources. Delegations also suggested that the criteria for the allocation of general resources be adjusted. The Executive Director agreed that there was a need to address issues of resource allocations and a need for increased contributions to general resources, and said that this would be discussed at the Board's third regular session in September.

140. Many delegations expressed support for the HIV/AIDS proposal and stressed the importance of UNICEF coordination with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). Delegations also praised the important role UNICEF is playing in the health sector in general and its good coordination with bilateral donors. Other speakers stressed the importance of the proposal, especially its emphasis on maternal health, safe motherhood and HIV/AIDS. A speaker emphasized the crucial importance of preventive education and communication based on the concept of role models, which UNICEF promoted most effectively. It also was stated that the UNICEF education programme must be well coordinated as part of overall Government efforts in this sector and called for improvements in this area. The Executive Director stated that UNICEF takes its relationship with UNAIDS very seriously and cited a number of examples of cooperation, including joint visits to programmes and secondment by UNICEF of staff to and from UNAIDS.

141. Two speakers questioned the validity of the suggestion in the proposal that no regional role is envisaged for UNAIDS, which they said had just started work and was expected to become stronger. Other delegations raised questions about paragraph 17 of the document on regional and national approaches and UNAIDS, while another stressed the importance of the UNICEF comparative advantage, which in this case would involve a focus at the country level. One delegation said that the proposal provided good background and a sound regional approach which should be complemented by country-based initiatives. It also was suggested that a regional-level should focus on the development of national policies. The Regional Director said that UNICEF was committed to coordination at all levels.

142. A speaker said that the proposal concentrated too much on the situation analysis and that there should be a more strategic document focusing on actual activities. A speaker suggested that the programme should emphasize regional support to national programmes, as reflected in UNICEF country programmes, with a broader link to UNAIDS. One delegation from a donor country said that the proposal could have been more specific and cited the example of an HIV/AIDS communication project in Nicaragua; there had been a lack of cooperation with donors and a lack of reporting on the first phase of the project.

143. A number of speakers referred to work in specific countries in the region. One delegation commended ongoing work in South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia on mobilization for HIV/AIDS prevention and asked if the proposal was related to similar programmes in the region. The speaker also requested further information on proposed strategies for behavioural changes. The Regional Director replied that UNICEF was committed to developing innovative strategies for behavioural change in respect of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. She cited the communication project focusing on an animated character called "Sara", which was modeled on the successful "Meena" project developed in South Asia. Another delegation stated that in Uganda, UNAIDS was already playing a lead role in HIV/AIDS programming. A speaker addressed the magnitude of AIDS in Burundi and commended the UNICEF role in that country, which was adapted to the country's specific situation. Speakers asked about UNICEF efforts to support AIDS orphans, and one speaker said that many children with HIV/AIDS have lost both parents, with girls in particular being affected. The Regional Director replied that UNICEF support consisted of identifying and helping to reinforce traditional coping mechanisms instead of attempting to institutionalize children, in addition to efforts to research the needs of child-headed households for better targeting of interventions.

144. A delegation asked why the UNICEF representative in Uganda was the convenor of the HIV/AIDS network for the region and if it would be more appropriate to have the regional office convene the network. The Regional Director said that there was a rotation scheme through which a UNICEF representative from the region was elected patron and convenor of existing regional networks, including the HIV/AIDS network. Another delegation was pleased to see special emphasis on monitoring and evaluation, which needed to be developed as an integral part of programmes, and said that UNICEF should pay more attention to issues of sustainability.

United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa

145. In view of the importance of the recently launched United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa, the Executive Board decided to have a brief discussion on the subject. Mr. Stephen Lewis, Deputy Executive Director, opened the discussion by stating that UNICEF programmes and activities would differ from country to country and would require full endorsement and participation by assisted Governments. He said that the programme process for the Initiative should not differ too much from the existing approval process for country programmes of cooperation and that UNICEF should be able to meet the resource requirements for the Initiative

through its traditional fund-raising mechanisms. Assisted Governments, in turn, would need to embark on vigorous social sector reform and create the right macroeconomic policy environment for programmes to start up and be successful.

146. Many delegations expressed support for the Initiative. Several speakers said that the Initiative should be seen as a strong and renewed commitment to Africa and also underlined the importance of delineating clear roles and responsibilities for the United Nations. Issues of coordination and comparative advantage were seen as crucial.

147. Some delegations asked about the role of the international financial institutions and said that they hoped conditions would not be attached to resource allocations. Delegations said that the negative impact of structural adjustment programmes on already heavily indebted African countries could compromise the objectives of Initiative and asked that this subject be reviewed.

148. Speakers raised a number of questions about the role and input of UNICEF to the Initiative. Speakers cited the relationship with the Bamako Initiative, the mobilization of resources and collaboration with the international financial institutions with regard to health and education programmes as important issues. Several delegations suggested that the Executive Board should be provided with annual reports on the role of UNICEF in the Initiative. Other speakers asked for clarification on how financial resources for the Initiative were to be channelled and on the role of UNICEF in the Initiative. Delegations also asked how priority countries would be selected. A speaker cautioned against a perceived tendency towards the preferential allocation of resources to technical support functions.

149. The Deputy Executive Director said that he shared some of the scepticism, but also shared the view that the Initiative represents a renewed commitment to Africa. For example, several major donors already were committed to funding programmes in support of education for girls.

Americas and the Caribbean

150. The Executive Board had before it three full country programme recommendations (CPRs), for Honduras (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.46), Mexico (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.47) and Peru (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.49); one short-duration country programme for Venezuela (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.50); and one recommendation for additional general resources to fund an already approved country programme for Nicaragua (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.48), which were introduced by the Regional Director for the Americas and the Caribbean.

151. One delegation said that in general, the recommendations from the region should refer more to UNICEF collaboration with UNDP and UNFPA. The programmes would be stronger if they had more measurable indicators and clearer explanations of the transition from the previous country programmes to the new ones. The speaker welcomed the attention paid to children in especially difficult circumstances, but said that more emphasis should be placed on the situation of indigenous populations. The Regional Director replied that the setting of programme objectives was an area in which the region's field offices were making progress; performance indicators were discussed in the respective master plans of operations, which were far more extensive that the CPRs. She added that indigenous groups were a priority concern, often expressed through the choice of geographic areas targeted by UNICEF, including urban areas.

152. A number of delegations said that the programme for Honduras seemed quite ambitious; they recommended a sharper focus on priority interventions and increased coordination with other United Nations agencies and other donors so that the limited resources of UNICEF will not be dispersed too broadly.

Several delegations commented positively on the increased emphasis given to maternal mortality reduction, HIV/AIDS and child rights, and one delegation queried the amounts of resources allocated for these concerns. A number of delegations endorsed the increased emphasis given to decentralization and capacity-building to improve the quality of services in rural areas. In referring to the water and sanitation programme, one delegation asked whether the coherence of Government policy and inter-agency coordination was still an issue, while another delegation referred to the positive evaluation of this programme and welcomed continued UNICEF support. The Regional Director replied that a coordination mechanism was now in place. Another delegation highlighted the positive role of the UNICEF office in Honduras and referred in particular to the work of UNICEF with children in high-risk urban areas.

153. One delegation stated that the CPR for Mexico was too vague on the issue of inter-agency coordination and that a strong mechanism for such coordination would be needed. In view of the federal structure of the Government in Mexico, the delegation asked about the prospects for legislative implementation of the terms of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. One speaker said that the role of UNICEF in Mexico is increasingly one of mobilizing resources in favour of children within the country and that UNICEF had helped the Mexican public to increase its respect for children's needs and rights. The Regional Director replied that many countries in the region had made progress in ensuring conformity of national laws with the Convention, and in the case of Mexico, because of the federal structure of the Government, work needed to proceed on a state-by-state basis.

154. The Regional Director replied that the Regional Management Team (composed of all country representatives) would be meeting with UNFPA on the issue of HIV/AIDS and reproductive health strategies for the region in the very near future. In addition, country-level mechanisms for the operation of UNAIDS were under development. She added that the concerns about the dispersion of activities and inter-agency coordination mechanisms would be shared with the relevant field offices.

155. Regarding the recommendation for increased general resources for Nicaragua, a speaker asked if the activities described in paragraph 6 of the recommendation (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.48) would be subject to approval of the Code for Children still currently under discussion in the country. While noting that the proposed programme fit well with national priorities, one delegation mentioned the risk of too broad a focus and dispersion of UNICEF assistance, and stressed the need for further coordination with other United Nations agencies and donors.

156. A delegation stated that UNICEF cooperation and coordination in Peru were satisfactory, but that increased information was needed on the nutritional status of children under the age of three years and on water and sanitation. The combined water and sanitation strategy was strongly endorsed by another delegation. A third delegation said that the CPR presented a clear explanation of inter-agency coordination and lessons learned, and that the strategy mix for the programme was appropriate.

157. The relevance and appropriateness of the bridging programme for Venezuela was explained and endorsed by one delegation. A second delegation called attention to the relatively high percentage (39 per cent) of funding devoted to programme support. The Regional Director replied that because of the liaison status of the country office, there was no administrative budget, and some of the programme support costs were for technical support.

Asia

158. The Executive Board had before it one full CPR for Cambodia (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.51), and two recommendations for short-duration country programmes, for India (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.52) and Pakistan (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.53),

which were introduced by the Regional Directors for East Asia and the Pacific and for South Asia, respectively.

159. Several delegations welcomed the shift in emphasis proposed in the Cambodia CPR and expressed support for its goal-oriented, community-based and participatory approach. Speakers also commented on the active participation of donors and United Nations agencies in the programme preparation process. The involvement of the Government in defining the shift in emphasis was seen as very positive. A delegation emphasized the importance of the HIV/AIDS programme and asked about the capacity of communities to finance services. The Regional Director said that efforts were being made to coordinate with UNAIDS in relation to the Mekong HIV Initiative, which was just starting. Communities already were paying for services that, unfortunately, were of very low quality. Efforts would be made to improve the quality and accessibility of services by using a "value for money" approach, stressing economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

160. A number of delegations asked about the high level of supplementary funding compared to the level of general resources, raising questions on the suitability of criteria for proposed levels of supplementary funding. Information was requested regarding the process by which programme adjustments would be made if supplementary funds received were significantly lower than the approved planning levels. The Regional Director responded that donors are interested in funding programmes in Cambodia, as evidenced by the firm pledges already received and the actual availability of $8.5 million annually for the present country programme. In the event of a shortfall in supplementary funds contributions, the number of provinces covered by the "community action for social development programme" would be reduced. A delegation requested clarification about coordination between the UNICEF-supported education programme and support for education provided by the European Union, which the Regional Director promised to provide at a later date.

161. Several delegations welcomed the recommendations for India and Pakistan, referring specifically to such innovative approaches as rights-based strategies. The integrated approach underpinning both programmes was welcomed by several delegations. Speakers said that the programme strategies and proposed budgets were consistent with national priorities. One delegation said that more funding should be allocated to safe motherhood, child survival and nutrition in the India programme. Concerning nutrition, the Regional Director said that there has been a very important strategic shift in South Asia, especially in India. The problem was not the lack of resources for child nutrition, but the need to refocus efforts on the prevention of malnutrition among children up to two years of age. This strategic shift would create a significant improvement in children's nutritional status over the next several years.

162. A number of delegations welcomed the attention given to the reduction of gender disparities, involvement of civil society, convergence of services and empowerment of communities, especially women. One delegation commended the emphasis on flexibility in the India programme so as to better address needs at the district level. Another delegation noted the large supplementary funding requirements for India, but said that more attention needed to be given to compliance with donor reporting requirements. The speaker also stated that not enough attention was being given to safe motherhood; this issue already had been raised during the Board's recent deliberations on the health strategy, in which the programme in India was referred to as an example of the imbalance between the two elements. The delegation hoped that the joint study on women's reproductive health planned by its bilateral aid agency and the UNICEF India office would be a useful support to the programme. Several other delegations also referred to the importance of the child survival and safe motherhood programme. The Regional Director said that there had been a very clear shift in emphasis to strengthen safe motherhood initiatives.

163. One delegation said that more emphasis should be placed on children's education in the India programme, as it was crucial to the success of other programmes. India's social and economic achievements needed to be further encouraged.

164. On the question of resource allocations, one delegation said that in comparison to the large child populations in India and Pakistan, the resources allocated were small. The speaker asked what strategy the Executive Board had adopted to deal with this imbalance between needs and resources. The delegation also asked for an explanation of the figures given in table 3 of the "round-up" paper (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.43/Add.1 and Corr.1), which indicated $20 million as "adjusted funds".

165. Noting its substantial bilateral programmes of cooperation in both India and Pakistan, another delegation said that the strategic emphasis on child rights was in line with its own emphasis. The empowerment goals of India's convergent community action programme were extremely important even if rather difficult to achieve. It was appropriate that the programme was being implemented on a pilot basis. The delegation noted the mention of "exemplary partnerships" in the education sector in India, but said that there was no mention of bilateral participation, especially in the district primary education programme. The delegation asked about shortcomings of the previous programme referred to in the Pakistan CPR. The Regional Director said that, broadly speaking, these were identified as fragmentation of programmes, lack of ownership of the programme by national authorities and too much emphasis on service delivery.

166. Regarding coordination within the Pakistan programme, delegations of several donor countries referred to positive experiences between UNICEF and donor agencies, but said that there should be closer collaboration in some areas, especially implementation of the social action programme and in health. One delegation asked if UNICEF had the capacity to become involved in the area of health planning and management and said that close collaboration with other partners was essential to avoid overlap.

167. Several delegations referred to monitoring and evaluation issues in both country programmes, with most saying they required more emphasis. Saying that the results of the change in strategies and emphasis in both country programmes needed to be monitored and evaluated effectively, a speaker asked if adequate assessment tools were available to do so. The delegation urged UNICEF to monitor the India programme closely, and suggested that the Board should receive a report on the impact of India's bridging programme. One delegation asked if the proposed emphasis on monitoring by communities would replace traditional monitoring. Several delegations said that the monitoring aspects of the Pakistan programme needed further development, especially indicators for measuring community participation. The Regional Director endorsed the importance of monitoring and evaluation and said that community monitoring and evaluation were meant primarily to support community action. They would not replace national-level monitoring and evaluation, but strengthen that process. One delegation said that in programmes in which several donors were extensively involved, it was important for UNICEF to be able to identify and then evaluate its particular role and contribution.

168. Several delegations referred to the substantial organization and staffing changes that had taken place recently in Pakistan and one delegation said that this had already adversely affected implementation of the ongoing programme. Another speaker asked if the provincial UNICEF field offices in Pakistan were being evaluated for cost-effectiveness. The Regional Director responded that the size of the field offices in Pakistan had been reduced, and there had been some centralization of functions as part of a general review taking place in several countries, including India. UNICEF was constantly evaluating the effectiveness of field offices through the budget review process.

169. One delegation noted the importance of combating child labour in both countries, but said that this topic had not been highlighted adequately in the CPRs. The Regional Director said that child labour was a major concern in both programmes and was being approached in a comprehensive manner, which perhaps was not reflected in the CPR.

170. The representatives of both India and Pakistan thanked delegations for their support and reviewed recent developments in their respective countries.

Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States

Country programme recommendations

171. The Executive Board had before it two full CPRs, for Albania (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.54) and Georgia (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.57), and four bridging recommendations, for Bosnia and Herzegovina and an area office (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.55), Croatia (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.56), The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.58) and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.59). The recommendations were introduced by the Acting Regional Director.

172. On the CPR for Albania, several delegations expressed approval of the increasing trends towards working with international partners, including the World Bank. Two speakers, in particular, welcomed UNICEF collaboration with their bilateral aid programmes in Albania in carrying out health programmes. One of the speakers commended the shift by UNICEF from an emergency approach to a longer-term social sector approach in the new country programme. The representative of Albania expressed appreciation to UNICEF and said that the Government was fully committed to the objectives of the proposed country programme. He asked about the extent of UNICEF assistance in Kosovo because of the plight of Albanians living in the area. The secretariat replied that UNICEF was aware of the needs of the population, particularly the health of Albanians in Kosovo, where UNICEF had a small field presence. In addition, the UNICEF programme in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia specifically targeted Kosovo for acute respiratory infections and diarrhoeal diseases, and was attempting to expand immunization coverage. UNICEF also was providing assistance to ease the shortage of educational materials.

173. One delegation said that the priorities of the Georgia programme would help to meet the needs of the country, although the problem of refugees could have been further elaborated upon, as could the nature and extent of cooperation with other agencies. Another speaker supported the priority given to immunization and encouraged the development of a plan for self-sufficiency in vaccines, in cooperation with other donors. The secretariat replied that UNICEF collaborated closely with such partners as the World Bank, UNDP, the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs, WHO and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Consultations also took place with such major donors as the European Union and the United States Agency for International Development, and the German and United Kingdom Committees for UNICEF. In addition, close contacts existed with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as *Médecins sans frontières* (Doctors without Borders) of France, the Netherlands and Spain; Save the Children; and the Norwegian Refugee Council. A plan for vaccine self-sufficiency was an important but complicated undertaking in which the time factor must be considered carefully so that the plan could be realistically achieved.

174. Most delegations commented positively on the CPRs and programme approaches for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, particularly the focus on local capacity-building. Several speakers also paid tribute to UNICEF and its staff for work often accomplished under extremely difficult circumstances.

175. A delegation expressed some concern and requested clarification about the planned budget for programme support costs in the CPR for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Several delegations stated that the amount of UNICEF resources appeared rather small in comparison to the ambitious programme objectives and suggested that they be refocused for clearer, achievable objectives so as to increase both the impact of the programmes and their visibility. The secretariat replied that costs for the area office in Sarajevo were in addition to general resources earmarked for the country programme for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The budget for the area office ($1 million per year) previously had been added to the Croatia programme because the office had been located in Zagreb. Because the area operation had been transferred from Zagreb to Sarajevo, programme support costs for the area office now were added to the CPR for Bosnia and Herzegovina. This in no way reduced programme funds (approximately $750,000 per year) for the country programme in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition to the amounts stated in the CPR, some $8 million from inter-agency emergency appeals, if fully funded, also would be available for this country. Hopefully, the supplementary-funded component would receive sufficient donor contributions.

176. Several delegations emphasized the need for very close coordination in the area of education with such major partners as the World Bank and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). It was stated that UNICEF should concentrate on its comparative advantages in the region. The good relations between UNICEF and UNHCR were cited as a very positive development. The secretariat replied that while close cooperation with UNESCO was important, this was a relatively new partner and cooperation with UNESCO was limited due to its limited resources. The World Bank had taken a lead role only at end of 1995, after the conclusion of the Dayton Peace Accord.

177. A delegation said that some of the data presented in the CPRs seemed outdated and requested clarification on the source of the data. A speaker requested a comparison between the main social indicators prior to the war and at present. Another delegation said that the link established between emergency and development interventions would be essential in future activities. The secretariat said that UNICEF relied on statistics provided by the United Nations Population Division for population statistics and on UNHCR for figures relating to refugees.

178. The representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina expressed gratitude to UNICEF for its efforts. The representative of The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia also expressed appreciation to UNICEF. He said that the language in parts of the CPR was inappropriate. His Government's Permanent Mission to the United Nations previously had expressed concern over some statements which, in its opinion, presented an inaccurate picture of the status of minorities in the country and the potential risk of crisis.

179. To a comment that Slovenia was a region requiring the attention of UNICEF, the secretariat said that UNICEF had a small field presence there.

UNICEF approach to Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States

180. The Executive Board had before it a report on the UNICEF approach to Central and Eastern Europe, CIS and the Baltic States (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.61), which was introduced by the Acting Regional Director.

181. The Board had a lengthy exchange of views on the approach paper. Some delegations spoke in favour, while other delegations focused on the difficulties in finding a common denominator for such a diverse group of 27 countries and recommended that the secretariat put more emphasis on subgroup or area approaches.

182. Many delegations expressed appreciation for the excellent analysis and documentation within the paper, which met their expectations. Two delegations said that the report represented the full entry of the region into the UNICEF family, and several delegations thanked the Executive Director for the high priority that she has accorded the region, including several visits to countries in the region.

183. Several delegations commended especially the focus on strengthening civil society as an essential partner in the countries of the region. The deteriorating situation of children and women in many countries of the region, often brought about by the burdens of transition, was noted by several delegations and the UNICEF response seen as appropriate. Several delegations also expressed satisfaction with the report's stress on lessons learned from past UNICEF experience within the region.

184. One delegation asked if the composition of the region made sense and whether a single approach could be used for a region containing such tremendously diverse countries. Several delegation spoke of the report as a general framework which would need to be supplemented by more area-specific strategies addressing the need of discreet groups of countries within the region. In this context, a number of delegations expressed support for the emphasis on a country-based approach to framing programmes within the general strategic approach. Within the overall approach, several delegations also stressed the need for UNICEF to focus on the countries with lower levels of development and countries experiencing emergencies. Two delegations suggested the need to formally categorize countries within the region for the purposes of refining relevant strategies, and one delegation said that UNICEF needed to clarify how it would respond to the mandates contained in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other conventions and international agreements.

185. Several delegations welcomed the close collaboration with other partners, notably the World Bank and UNDP, citing it as positive follow-up to General Assembly resolutions on coordination within the United Nations system and also as an effective way of ensuring the maximum impact of UNICEF resources.

186. A number of delegations expressed concern about the relationship between UNICEF and the National Committees within the region. One delegation said that this issue was related to part of MEP which was reviewing the relationship with National Committees. Several speakers said that the issue also was related to resource mobilization within the region. It also was stated that the relationship between the new regional office and the existing UNICEF offices which work with National Committees would need to be clarified.

187. Several delegations addressed the subject of resource mobilization for the new region, with one saying that the establishment of the new regional office within the context of a zero growth budget meant that UNICEF resources for developing countries already had been reduced. The latter delegation and several others stressed the need for innovative fund-raising strategies, including local fund-raising and partnerships with other organizations active in these countries. In this way UNICEF programmes and objectives could be supported without increasing the relatively small amount of general resources currently allocated to the region, thus, jeopardizing funding for UNICEF programmes in developing countries. As noted in the report, the substantial resources available in many countries in the region should make such an approach workable. The speaker said that the present reductions in UNICEF headquarters staff, although initially intended to increase resources available for developing countries, actually had not succeeded in doing so partly because of the added expense of the new regional office.

188. All delegations addressing the issue supported the proposed structure of the regional office and the liaison offices proposed for Belarus, the Russian Federation and Ukraine. One speaker said that there might be a need to

reconsider the role, function and costs of all regional offices within the context of MEP. All speakers supported locating the new regional office in Geneva. One delegation questioned the comparison of the number of staff proposed for the new regional office with that of other regional offices. A speaker requested clarification about the nature and structure of the proposed liaison offices and another asked about the "hierarchy" of offices, from country office to area office to regional office.

189. A delegation, supported many others, expressed concerns because the report was on an "approach" rather than a "strategy", although in fact it was a strategy for the region. Speakers were concerned by the fact that the secretariat had submitted the report only for information and not for a decision by the Executive Board, which usually was the case with a programme strategy.

190. The Acting Regional Director said that UNICEF experience in the region had highlighted the strong linkages between the Russian Federation and the other countries of the CIS, particularly on the procurement of supplies. The proposed liaison office in Moscow, therefore, would greatly facilitate UNICEF activities not only in the Russian Federation, but also in other countries that formerly were part of the Soviet Union. He explained that UNICEF was looking for space in the UNDP offices in Minsk, Belarus, and Kiev, Ukraine, to accommodate the small UNICEF presence there as well as space in the UNHCR office in Moscow. Shared premises and a small team would reduce operational expenses in Belarus, the Russian Federation and Ukraine and also help to ensure coordination with other United Nations agencies. The liaison offices were strategic in so far as they provided on-the-spot monitoring of facilities. UNICEF had received several million dollars in recent years for Belarus, the Russian Federation and Ukraine and would like to implement and track those funds in a responsible way and in the spirit of full accountability. The donor community should be entitled to better feedback and follow-up in these three countries.

191. Regarding the issues raised with respect to National Committees for UNICEF within the region, UNICEF would have to play a stronger role in programme-related activities and make sure that qualified programme staff were available to adequately cover activities carried out in countries with National Committees. Frequent requests for temporary assistance, e.g., for vaccines, clearly demonstrated that there was a need to go beyond the problems identified in the situation analysis and to devise work plans with Governments and National Committees in those countries.

192. The Executive Director said that she welcomed the debate on the nature of the report, which had been provided by the secretariat as background information for the Executive Board for its later consideration of the proposed budgets for the regional and liaison offices. The types of issues on which the Executive Board needed to take decisions and the required supporting documentation were currently under discussion within the framework of MEP and the project team examining relations between the Board and secretariat.

193. On the issue of the composition of the new region, the Executive Director said that there were wide differences between countries in most regions; this should not be the basis for deciding or questioning the countries to be included in this region. The size of staff and budgets should not be compared, given the differing challenges and opportunities facing each region. In response to queries regarding the relationship of country offices to area offices and the regional office, she said that a major aspect of MEP had to do with reducing "hierarchical" structures and reinforcing the centrality of the country programme. She would discourage delegations from concentrating overly on reporting relationships and ask them to continue to provide guidance on programme approaches such as those outlined in the report.

194. As the approach paper was "for information", the Executive Board concluded its discussion without adopting a formal decision.

Middle East and North Africa

195. The Executive Board had before it one recommendation for additional general resources for Lebanon (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.60), which was introduced by the Regional Director.

196. Several delegations complimented Lebanon's efforts and achievements in accelerating the development process during the last year. All speakers commended and strongly supported the role played by UNICEF in the country's rehabilitation efforts. Another delegation supported the coordination between UNICEF and its partners in the country programme, especially the Government. One delegation spoke of the positive role of UNICEF-supported programmes in the areas of peace education, salt iodization and promotion of child rights. A delegation emphasized that special hardship conditions in the south of the country generated the need for specific programme attention.

197. One speaker, while commending the work of UNICEF, indicated the need for further strengthening of coordination with others at all levels. The delegation also said that the programme's objectives were ambitious in relation to the funds available and, therefore, there should be stronger prioritization within the programme. The Regional Director explained that the current recommendation covered only the year 1996, and the new CPR, to be submitted to the Executive Board at the third regular session, would address those considerations. Another delegation commended the reduction of the supply component in the country programme. (See the annex, decision 1996/7, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

B. Mid-term country programme reviews and evaluations

198. The Executive Board had before it a summary of mid-term reviews of country programmes (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.42). The mid-term reviews for each region were introduced by the respective Regional Directors.

199. Most delegations expressed appreciation for the efforts made by the secretariat to prepare a summary of the mid-term reviews and the lessons learned from them. Nevertheless, many delegations cited the uneven quality of the analyses and said that there was inadequate analysis of programme achievements and constraints. With few exceptions, the summaries were not sufficiently analytical. Several delegations appreciated the quality of the guidelines on the preparation of mid-term reviews that had been shared with field offices. Several delegations pointed out that the summaries described achievements, but did not compare them to targets or explain what might be needed to accelerate progress.

200. Several delegations called for more information on major evaluations and studies. They appreciated that monitoring and evaluation functions still were not sufficiently developed in many country offices and needed to be strengthened as part of more effective country programming. The secretariat was requested to ensure that future reports provided clear information about how routine monitoring, thematic and sectoral evaluations, studies and general analysis of the socio-economic and political environment have contributed to the reorientation of programmes.

201. Several delegations suggested that mid-term reviews should serve as an opportunity to examine the use and flow of resources, especially the relation between general resources and supplementary funds. A review of the levels of resource mobilization should be a basis for the reorientation of programme activities, and as necessary, the reformulation of the strategy for resource mobilization.

202. One delegation commented favourably on the mid-term review of Guinea-Bissau and noted that it followed the appropriate guidelines. The same

delegation pointed out certain inconsistencies between the review of progress of the Rwanda country programme and the results of an international evaluation of the relief operation in Rwanda.

203. Delegations' comments on the mid-term reviews for the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan and Yemen were similar to those made for the other reviews. One delegation said that the summaries for the Middle East and North Africa region were of better quality than those of other regions.

204. On the Bolivia mid-term review, one delegation said that the summary highlighted qualitative rather than quantitative progress in meeting national objectives, and that relatively little was reported on the results of UNICEF inputs *per se*. It was suggested that a mid-term report should highlight first an analysis of UNICEF support and then its impact.

205. The secretariat agreed that future mid-term review summaries needed to be more systematic, analytical and problem-oriented, taking into account *inter alia*, lessons learned. The Regional Director for East Asia and the Pacific agreed that the mid-term reviews should be used as tools for monitoring. While the process for the preparation of country programmes was well developed, the next phase had to focus on monitoring and evaluation. The country programme for the Lao People's Democratic Republic, for example, had been set up to help the country achieve certain goals. The mid-term review was a genuine reflection of what the UNICEF programme was trying to do to support the country in achieving those goals.

C. Budgetary matters

Integrated budget for headquarters and regional offices for 1996-1997

206. The Executive Board considered the following documents:

(a) Integrated budget for headquarters and regional offices for 1996-1997 (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.5 and Corr.1);

(b) Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the integrated budget for UNICEF headquarters and regional offices for the biennium 1996-1997 (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.7).

207. Introducing the documents, the Executive Director said that the integrated budget being presented to the Board was a "no-growth" budget. Within the budget, the secretariat had been able to fund the following specific activities: the Programme Manager System (PROMS) to improve field operations; support for the United Nations Integrated Management Information System; establishment of the regional office for Central and Eastern Europe, CIS and the Baltic States; and accommodate the mandatory salary increases. She expressed her satisfaction at being able to present an integrated budget format for headquarters and regional offices. With the new format, it was possible to see the full cost of a division or an office, information which previously had fragmented from three different funding sources. What previously had been two documents consisting of 351 pages had been prepared in a concise 84-page document.

208. The Executive Director said that the strategy behind the budget was to implement Board policy and take advantage of opportunities for improvement whenever possible. Therefore, no actions were requested in the proposed budget which had not previously been reflected in Executive Board decisions. Any proposed structural changes were to improve operational efficiencies. The budget represented the process of management excellence and did not involve setting or changing policy, but rather was the illustration of opportunities to make UNICEF a more efficient and effective organization.

209. Most delegations expressed appreciation for the secretariat's efforts to present a no-growth budget, which they said reflected an acknowledgement of the current financial climate prevailing in the development community. In addition, new costs, such as those for the establishment of the new regional office, were being met with the same level of financial resources. One delegation expressed concern that the no-growth budget reflected the decline of available resources and would cause the secretariat to spread its resources too thinly. Several delegations said that the informal consultations on the proposed budget had been very useful in providing clarifications on some areas of concern.

210. Some delegations said that the lack of growth in the budget had been achieved mainly through reductions in advocacy and programme development activities, and that staff costs had increased by 3.9 per cent. One delegation said that in the prevailing climate of limited resources, the trend was for increased efficiency through doing "more for less". Deputy Executive Director, Ms. Karin Sham Poo, replied that there was an overall decrease in staff for the organization as a whole; the increase in staff costs was a result of increases in post adjustments and salaries applicable to all United Nations agencies. The reductions in advocacy and programme development activities, which previously had been in the global funds budget, were due to the reclassification of some of those costs, such as consultancies into category 1 or staff costs, and category 2 or general operating costs. She agreed that apart from those reclassifications, there were reductions in those activities since calculated choices had to be made without endangering the essential technical capacity at headquarters and regional offices for maintaining quality and accountability in programmes.

211. One delegation expressed concern that the reduction of costs for research and studies in the regional offices might affect the efficiency of the offices' monitoring activities. The Deputy Executive Director said that the evaluation and monitoring budgets were included in the budgets of country offices and would not affect the organization's evaluation capacity.

212. All delegations welcomed the first stage of the new integrated budget format, saying that they found it to be clear, concise, lucid, informative and more transparent and user-friendly than previous budget presentations. They encouraged the secretariat to continue to develop and improve of the budget format. Some delegations said that integration of the budget involved not only consolidating sources of funds, but also integrating the roles of various structures within the organization.

213. Some delegations concurred with the Advisory Committee's observation that the integrated budget proposal was difficult to follow as it presented only a fragmented view of the operation of UNICEF. They said that the document lacked information on the overall budgetary strategy of UNICEF in the context of its policy orientation, programme focus and operational strategies, particularly in the field. Some delegations said, however, that there was sufficient information on UNICEF policies in the budget document and that the proposed budget should be a presentation of the financial implications of policies. One speaker said that the budget document was not an instrument for introducing new policies. Some delegations said that they look forward to the full presentation of the integrated budget for the 1998-1999 biennium, which would include field offices and headquarters and regional offices. Delegations further noted the continued dialogue regarding the integrated budget format for field offices which the Executive Board expected to review prior to the submission of the budget proposal for field offices.

214. Several delegations agreed with the Advisory Committee's recommendation that future budget proposals should identify the total costs of consultants separately. They also agreed with the Advisory Committee about the need to avoid the overuse of consultants in the reform process and stressed the need for full use of in-house expertise. The Deputy Executive Director said that

the secretariat would provide the costs of consultants separately in future budget proposals.

215. The proposed restructuring of the health sector of Programme Division, particularly the Bamako Initiative Unit, was viewed with concern by many delegations because of the possible impact on programme activities. Speakers asked for reassurance from the secretariat that the restructuring would not affect the support given to the health sector and to the Bamako Initiative in all countries. The Executive Director stated that in spite of the reductions made, health still remained the single biggest programme sector in UNICEF, with 241 health staff working in country offices. The downsizing did not reflect a reduced emphasis on health, but was proposed to streamline and strengthen the health section in line with the health strategy approved by the Executive Board at its third regular session in September 1995.

216. One delegation welcomed the proposed strengthening of Programme Division's sections responsible for children in especially difficult circumstances and gender and development. Delegations expressed support for the consolidation of the offices of Planning and Coordination, Evaluation and Research, and Social Policy and Economic Analysis, with the understanding that this would not be at the expense of UNICEF evaluation activities. Delegations stated that although there were no policy changes proposed in the budget, the Executive Board needed to follow-up the structural changes being proposed carefully.

217. Questions were raised by some speakers about the movement of posts from field offices to the regional offices, particularly in Eastern and Southern Africa and in Burkina Faso. Deputy Executive Director, Ms. Sham Poo, said that in the case of Burkina Faso, the posts being transferred to the West and Central Africa Regional Office performed advisory functions which benefited a number of countries in the region and, therefore, the posts would be more efficiently utilized if located in the regional office. The transfer of posts to the Eastern and Southern Africa regional office represented a consolidation of supply, logistics and information resources management functions which were duplicated in several UNICEF offices operating in Nairobi. This operational improvement had been proposed as a result of internal audit observations raised regarding operating efficiency in cases where there are multiple UNICEF offices in one location with separate financial and administrative functions.

218. Delegations supported the establishment of the regional office for Central and Eastern Europe, CIS and the Baltic States and the establishment of liaison offices in Minsk (Belarus), Moscow (Russian Federation) and Kiev (Ukraine). One speaker welcomed the choice of Geneva as the location of the regional office, saying that because of the existing support and expertise currently available in Geneva, resources would be used in a more efficient manner. Some delegations expressed support for the proposed presence in Brussels to liaise with the institutions of the European Union.

219. Concerns were raised by several delegations about the calculation of the overhead ratio. One speaker said that a well-defined understanding of overhead costs should be undertaken within the context of the budget harmonization exercise with other United Nations agencies. Deputy Executive Director, Ms. Sham Poo, replied that the definition of overhead and the calculation of the overhead ratio was currently under discussion. A clearer definition would be presented to the Executive Board in the full context of the final integrated budget, which would include field offices.

220. Most delegations expressed support for the proposed budget. However, speakers requested the secretariat to inform the Executive Board at an early stage of any revisions proposed as a result of the management reform process.

221. It was noted by some delegations that the budget for the Americas and the Caribbean Regional Office should have shown a decrease instead of an increase from 1994-1995 as a result of the reduction in the Special Adjustment Facility for Latin America and the Caribbean (SAFLAC). The Deputy Executive Director, Ms. Sham Poo, said that $1 million had been allocated from SAFLAC to the regional office in 1994-1995. If that was taken into account, the revised amount for 1994-1995 in the budget table for the regional office would be $8.3 million; therefore, there was a $0.2 million decrease in the regional office's budget for 1996-1997.

222. Questions on the role of the regional office were raised by many delegations. However, it was recognized that this subject would be addressed as part of MEP.

223. The secretariat concurred with the recommendation made by several delegations and the Advisory Committee to include a table of financial resources in future budget documents.

224. Some delegations noted the increase in cash and supply assistance in the proposed budget. Deputy Executive Director, Ms. Sham Poo, explained that the amount of $5.7 million represented the programme assistance allocation to countries in Central and Eastern Europe, CIS, and the Baltic States which did not have country programmes.

225. One delegation cautioned the secretariat against putting too much emphasis on operational efficiencies which might be at the expense of the quality of programmes. The Executive Director explained that improvements in operational efficiencies were important in the current development aid community. UNICEF needed to be managed efficiently to ensure programme stability and must continue to challenge itself programmatically to be responsive to the needs of women and children.

226. Some delegations expressed concern about the issuance of 200-series contracts for the new posts proposed in the budget, in light of the similar concerns expressed by the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee had recommended that such matters be submitted for review to the International Civil Service Commission and ultimately to the General Assembly. Deputy Executive Director, Ms. Sham Poo, said that the proposal had been made to provide the Executive Director with the maximum flexibility in the establishment of posts, given the voluntary nature of funding for the organization. Discussions on this issue were under way within the United Nations system, the results of which would be submitted to the General Assembly through the Fifth Committee.

227. One delegation requested that the secretariat, in adopting budgetary policies, consider their adaptation to various country or regional situations and said that budget policies need not be uniformly applied to all offices. Several delegations expressed support for the strengthening of the internal audit functions in UNICEF. (See the annex, decisions 1996/11, 1996/12, 1996/13, 1996/14 and 1996/15, for the texts of the decisions adopted by the Executive Board.)

Harmonization of budget presentations

228. The Comptroller and Director of the Division of Financial Management made an oral report on harmonization of budget presentations. She said that a similar report had been presented to the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA at its second regular session of 1996. She outlined the context of Executive Board decision 1995/37 (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1) and UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board decision 1995/30 on budget harmonization, which had led to the presentation of this oral report. She added that internal working documents on the comparison of budget presentations were available to the Executive Board.

229. In summarizing the actions taken to date, the Comptroller stated that in 1995, a detailed comparison of budget presentations, based on the 1994-1995 initial budget estimates of UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF, had been completed. The study had revealed that the budget presentations of UNDP and UNFPA were harmonized to a large extent and were in line with the budget presentation of the United Nations. While UNDP initially had based its budget presentation on that of the United Nations, and UNFPA had subsequently revised its budget presentation to harmonize it with that of UNDP and the United Nations, UNICEF had developed its budget presentation independently. The study showed material differences in content, definition of concepts and presentation between the budgets of UNDP and UNFPA on the one hand, and of UNICEF on the other hand.

230. However, during 1994, UNICEF had undertaken a major management review, which among other things, called for UNICEF to adopt an integrated budget approach, entailing fundamental changes in the scope and content of its budget presentation. The Executive Board had endorsed those recommendations at its third regular session in September 1995 (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1, decision 1995/30) and agreed that UNICEF initially would present a 1996-1997 budget covering its headquarters and regional offices only, in the new format, to be considered by the Board at its April 1996 session. Thus, the earlier comparison based on the 1994-1995 budget estimates was rendered obsolete.

231. A new comparison based on the 1996-1997 budget estimates for the three organizations could only be undertaken once UNICEF had prepared its 1996-1997 budget for headquarters and regional offices, a document which was finalized in mid-February 1996. Since that time, a preliminary comparison of the three organizations' budgets had been completed. The comparison covered headquarters' activities only. A comparison of field activities would be undertaken in 1997 when UNICEF had prepared its field budget for the first time in the new format. The comparison was based on the proposed budget of UNICEF, which had not yet been approved by the Executive Board.

232. The preliminary comparison indicated that the differences between UNICEF on the one hand, and UNDP and UNFPA on the other, might not have narrowed. The differences concerned not only presentation, but also the scope and content of the budget. Moreover, the inherent differences in the nature of the organizations needed to be taken into consideration. Thus, more work was needed in order to present to the respective Executive Boards a comprehensive picture of the substantive issues involved.

233. With regard to the timing and nature of future reports to the Executive Boards, UNICEF would present another oral progress report at the annual session in June 1996, together with working papers as needed. An account of the debate on the issue also would be reported to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session in June 1996. It was noted, however, that the annual session of the Executive Board would not have taken place in time for reporting to the Council session, nor did UNICEF have proposals for the budgets of field offices. Thus, it seemed impractical to have proposals reviewed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in time for the third regular session 1996, to be held in September, as requested by the Executive Board, since the documentation would have to be ready by May 1996. The Comptroller suggested that the presentation of the initial proposals to the Executive Board be made at the first regular session of 1997, rather than at the third regular session of 1996. However, if the Board wished, another oral progress report could be presented at that session.

234. One delegation thanked the secretariat for the report and the work done so far and expressed appreciation for the working papers made available. It was a good starting point to see where harmonization was possible. The delegation, supported by others, stressed that the goal of harmonization of budgets was to make them more similar so as to promote understanding and support good decision-making. The similarities must go beyond content and

presentation styles to encompass the underlying principles of the preparation of accounts and estimates. All budget documents must be upgraded, with the recognition that more similarity would not mean sameness and that variances from the harmonization norm should be clearly indicated in the budget documents. The efforts to harmonize budgets must include, firstly, a common definition and usage of budget terms, i.e., the same words must mean the same thing from one budget to the next; and secondly, commonly accepted accounting approaches and policies. The third element should be the disclosure of basic key information, e.g. on the use of funds, a breakdown of overhead costs, programme delivery costs and programme costs, and within these a breakdown of salaries versus operating costs, as well as of Professional and non-Professional staff. There also should be minimum requirements for content such as the same types of table with similar kinds of breakdowns and roll-ups. Lastly, there should be a common presentation style, ideally one budget document that would consolidate the regular budget and extrabudgetary resources and as a minimum, a summary table which would consolidate the global financial plan of the organization. The harmonization of budgets must lead to simplification, visibility, completeness and comparability.

235. Some delegations expressed great concern over the lack of progress, although they recognized that the secretariat had had a considerable workload in preparing the integrated budget. It was pointed out that the integrated budget ought to have been structured in such a way that it was consistent with the harmonized format. Some delegations said that the progress report on budget harmonization should be discussed during the June 1996 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council. It was suggested that the report to the Council should include whatever progress has been made at that point, and the debate during the April 1996 session should be made part of the report.

236. Concerns were raised by some delegations that the distinct identity of UNICEF might be lost in the process of harmonization. Some delegations, however, said that the loss of identity would be minimal. Given the importance of the subject of harmonization, and to have a better understanding of the exercise in connection with integrated budgets, a delegation requested that an inter-sessional meeting be organized by the secretariat.

237. Some delegations preferred that the secretariat keep to the original timetable set for the presentation of the initial proposals, which was the third regular session in September 1996. Due to the timing constraints, the Comptroller requested that the initial proposal be presented during the first regular session of 1997.

238. One delegation noted that the working papers provided by the secretariat were not provided in other working languages. The secretariat said that it would have to coordinate with UNDP/UNFPA on this issue as the same working papers were prepared with the other agencies and distributed in the same manner. (See the annex, decision 1996/16, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

D. Progress report on the management excellence programme

239. The Executive Board had before it a progress report on MEP in UNICEF (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.6), which was introduced by the Executive Director.

240. Many delegations expressed their positive appraisal of the report on progress made to date and appreciation for the use of inter-sessional meetings as a means of keeping the Board informed and providing opportunities for the Board to provide guidance and direction. Two delegations noted their frustration with the limited opportunities open to Board members to participate fully in shaping the change process. One speaker requested that further steps be taken to define the relationship between the Board and the secretariat within the context of MEP.

241. On the issue of structure, a number of delegations endorsed the principles established by the Structure of Accountability Phase I project team, making special reference to the centrality of the country approach and more participatory management practices as being highly valued. A few speakers highlighted the need for dialogue on the relationships between country, regional and headquarters levels. One speaker expressed concern on the issue of control and oversight in a decentralized system. Several delegations expressed the need for the Board to fully debate the impact of proposals on structure prior to decision-making, including a review of the role of regional offices. One speaker stressed the importance of ensuring coordination with overall United Nations reform.

242. On emerging proposals for relations with National Committees, several speakers stressed the importance of consultation with the Board prior to decision-making. Questions were raised on the role of National Committees regarding advocacy and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. One delegation stated that it would not support expenditures for such activities in industrialized countries. Further clarification was requested on the issue of regional management of National Committees. One speaker highlighted the need for closer relations between UNICEF and both National Committees and their Governments.

243. One delegation requested consultation with the Board on the outcome of the consultancy on supply operations. Another speaker said that he hoped recommendations on relations with the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations would go beyond the vague and unsatisfactory proposals that had emerged from the work of the project team. A few speakers praised the secretariat's efforts to create a multidisciplinary team on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and requested more information. One delegation requested more information on the merging of strategic planning, evaluation and social policy and economic analysis functions, and on how the new office would function.

244. Requests were made by many delegations for a timetable, in matrix form, listing when recommendations would be brought to the Board for discussion, identifying issues requiring Board approval and highlighting when key decisions would need to be taken.

245. Delegations also requested that opportunities be made for informal but substantive discussions before any MEP recommendations were presented to the Board. One speaker suggested that an open-ended working group be established to consider the issues and recommendations properly. Another speaker stressed the importance of the Board being well prepared in advance for discussions to take place on recommendations emerging from MEP, including the need for the distribution of background documentation prior to inter-sessional meetings to allow for more substantive discussions.

246. The secretariat agreed that the following topics would be discussed at the 29 May inter-sessional meeting of the Executive Board:
(a) recommendations on relations with National Committees for UNICEF; (b) a progress report on the new PROMS; (c) emerging recommendations related to structure; and (d) recommendations from the external consultancy on information technology. A timetable for discussions of various proposals with the Board and a subsequent decision-making timeframe, as well as an update on linkages between Booz•Allen & Hamilton would be included in next MEP progress report, which will be submitted to the 1996 annual session.

E. Annual report to the Economic and Social Council/follow-up to the triennial policy review on operational activities for development

247. The Executive Board had before it the Executive Director's annual report to the Economic and Social Council (E/ICEF/1996/10 (Part II)), a combined report that dealt with both agenda items, which was introduced by the Executive Director.

248. Most delegations speaking on the annual report to the Economic and Social Council said that it was comprehensive and useful and represented an improvement over previous reports. However, many delegations said that in future, the report should be more analytical, substantive and problem-oriented and less descriptive, and provide specific recommendations for the Council. Some delegations said that the sections on humanitarian activities and collaboration with the Bretton Woods institutions did provide this sort of information. Some delegations said that the report was too short, and others stated that it should have been prepared jointly with the other funds and programmes reporting to the Council. The Executive Director took note of the comments and that said they would be taken into account in the preparation of future reports.

249. Many delegations noted the importance of implementing General Assembly resolution 50/120 of 20 December 1995 and of enhanced inter-agency collaboration. Several delegations expressed concern about the fact only two UNICEF staff members were serving as resident coordinators and raised queries as to what UNICEF was providing to the resident coordinator system in material terms, what support was provided for country strategy notes and national capacity-building, national execution, field-level committees, coordinated monitoring and evaluation, and the programme approach. The Executive Director said that UNICEF was actively participating in the resident coordinator system and had undertaken actions to increase the numbers of UNICEF staff serving in this capacity.

250. Regarding coordination at the regional level, in particular among UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA, one delegation pointed out that while both UNICEF and UNFPA had a presence in the regions, the number and location of their offices and the countries they covered were not the same, and UNDP dealt with regions from its headquarters. The same delegation expressed the view that if UNICEF wished to promote coordination at the regional level, it should have a policy or strategy for each region, one adopted, after due consideration, by the Executive Board. The same delegation then asked how UNICEF intended to pursue coordination with other organizations such as UNDP and UNFPA in the future and whether the secretariat was of the view that it was unnecessary to reform the present structure of UNICEF regional offices. Those issues could not be discussed further.

251. Some delegations expressed concern over the proposed staffing reductions in the Office of Internal Audit, and a delegation asked about progress towards attaining equitable gender balance in UNICEF staff. The Executive Director assured delegations that the office enjoyed her full support, both in staffing and resources, and reiterated her commitment to adequate gender balance.

252. Most delegations commended the working relationship between UNICEF and the Bretton Woods institutions, particularly the World Bank, and urged that a strong relationship continue. Continued collaboration in the areas of policy, programmes and joint missions were referred to by several delegations. The absence of reference to the regional banks was noted. Some delegations, while supportive, cautioned UNICEF that this relationship must remain under the overall authority of the Government of the programme country. The secretariat agreed that the prime responsibility is with Governments, that the country programme should be used as the basis for programme activities and on the areas of difference in approach between UNICEF and the World Bank.

253. Many delegations commended UNICEF on the approach to humanitarian assistance, and it was stated that UNICEF should extend its coordinated training to Governments as well as the United Nations system. (See the annex, decision 1996/8, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

F. 1996 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award

254. The Executive Board had before it a recommendation of the Executive Director (E/ICEF/1996/11). The Executive Director said that a total of 21 nominations were received from all parts of the world. After careful review at its meeting held on 8 April, the Bureau had endorsed the Executive Director's recommendation that the 1996 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award be presented to the Centre régional pour le développement et la santé (CREDESA) (Regional Centre for Health and Development) of Benin.

255. Speakers praised the work of CREDESA, especially its key role in the launching of the Bamako Initiative in the late 1980s. Following the Board's decision to endorse the Executive Director's recommendation (see the annex, decision 1996/9), the delegate of Benin expressed appreciation for the award, which was in recognition of the work of CREDESA by the international community. The award, he continued, would help to publicize the activities of CREDESA on behalf of women, children and men.

G. Other matters

Recommendations to the Executive Board: extension of cooperation with Rotary International for polio eradication and extension of the Vaccine Independence Initiative

256. The Director, Programme Division, introduced the recommendations which were contained in document E/ICEF/1996/P/L.62. These two programmes, he said, are among the great success stories of UNICEF, exemplifying how UNICEF can involve the participation of civil society and NGOs in development and promote self-reliance and sustainability in development programmes.

257. Since 1987, Rotary International has contributed over $115 million to UNICEF for the purchase of oral polio vaccine in support of the global effort to make the world polio free. This contribution has enabled UNICEF to provide over 1 billion doses of vaccines for children in over 65 countries. The impact of this long-term effect to control polio can be witnessed in the significant decline in reported cases of polio. The polio eradication programme has been a subject of continuing evaluation, assessment and monitoring by WHO, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other institutions in which UNICEF has been an active partner. As a result of the strong surveillance programme in this field, WHO and PAHO have been able to certify that the entire western hemisphere is now polio free and that there are many emerging polio-free zones in East Asia and in southern Africa. Rotary's partnership and support in this global effort have been of tremendous importance in making this achievement possible, and it has demonstrated the tremendous contribution that a private, volunteer organization can make to public health when mobilized. In the document, the Executive Director is recommending that the Board approve $60 million in supplementary funds which UNICEF expects to receive from Rotary International in the coming five years.

258. The Vaccine Independence Initiative was originally approved by Board in 1991 as a programme to assist countries to become increasingly self-sufficient in financing and procuring vaccines. The Board authorized the creation of a revolving fund, modelled after the PAHO Working Capital Fund for Vaccines, to enable countries to purchase vaccines through UNICEF using their own currencies and budgets. Since its inception, UNICEF has raised some

$8.5 million to capitalize the Initiative. Many countries previously dependent on donors for vaccines have now assumed the costs for their own vaccine supply. Eight countries are currently purchasing vaccines with their own currencies through the Initiative, and numerous other countries are considering joining in 1996. UNICEF is seeking to continue to offer this service as a mechanism to assist countries in making the transition from donor-reliance to self-reliance. In the document, the Executive Director is recommending that this modest but successful programme of vaccine self-sufficiency be extended for another five years and that the Board approve $10 million in supplementary funding as indicated in document E/ICEF/1996/P/L.43/Corr.1 and E/ICEF/1996/P/L.43/Add.1/Corr.1.

259. All speakers expressed strong support for the two proposals. The polio eradication effort was viewed as an extraordinary partnership between the public and private sector which was paying off in real terms with very impressive results. Rotary International was commended for its critical role in these efforts, having raised over $250 million in support of the goal of eradicating polio.

260. Concerning the Vaccine Independence Initiative, one delegation said that the Initiative was playing a critical role in assisting host countries to establish sustainable means to finance and promote needed vaccines. He noted with satisfaction that UNICEF had raised $8.5 million to capitalize the fund and that the list of donors had expanded. He expressed concern, however, that after four years, only eight countries were currently involved in the fund and asked the secretariat to comment on why more countries were not participating. In that light, he urged UNICEF to increase its promotion of the fund and to take the lead with other partners, using the inter-agency coordinating committees, to help countries develop sound strategical plans to achieve vaccine self-sufficiency.

261. While supporting both programme recommendations, one Board member expressed concern about their presentation, and he urged the secretariat to ensure that in future, all programme proposals submitted to the Board for extensions contain clear references to evaluations that have been undertaken during the previous programme period so that the Board has a basis on which to make an informed decision.

262. The Chairman of the Rotary International Programme for the Eradication of Polio then addressed the Board. He informed the meeting that in 1995, Rotary had awarded its most prestigious honour to world understanding and a prize of $100,000 for the humanitarian work of UNICEF in the name of the late Executive Director, James P. Grant, with whom they shared a dream of a world without polio. He thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak about the extraordinary cooperation between UNICEF and Rotary in the common goal of eradicating the polio virus. With 70-90 per cent of polio victims being children under three years of age, he said that eliminating the virus would not only save children from this crippling and sometimes fatal disease, but that mothers would be able to better fulfil their own lives, families would be able to function properly and Governments would be able to devote health dollars to other areas. It is estimated, he continued, that $1.5 billion would be saved annually by the eradication of polio. The number of reported cases of polio in the world has declined 85 per cent since 1988, and it is estimated that the figure for 1995 will be over 90 per cent. Rotary International is mobilizing immunization centres around the world and expects to have spent nearly $400 million, mostly on purchasing polio vaccines for needy countries, by the time eradication is certified. In fact, he said in closing, that Rotary had already committed $250 million of the $400 million and sought Board approval of the extension of UNICEF cooperation with Rotary in this effort. (See the annex, decision 1996/17, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

Draft report of the Secretary-General on enhancing the internal oversight mechanisms in operational funds and programmes

263. The Executive Board had before it the draft report of the Secretary-General on enhancing the internal oversight mechanisms in operational funds and programmes (E/ICEF/1996/CRP.10). The Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services took part in the discussion.

264. Delegations addressing this agenda item supported the general concept of enhancing the internal oversight mechanisms in operational funds and programmes. They emphasized that the oversight mechanism was critical for funds and programmes and that a strong and effective oversight function was a key element of sound management culture, efficiency and accountability. They mentioned that there was no systemic way to assess the performance of oversight activities, emphasizing that internal and external oversight go hand in hand.

265. Some delegations emphasized that the adequacy of services are to be determined according to the specific needs of the funds and programmes for appropriate oversight mechanism. Therefore, it is necessary for UNICEF to identify the services available at the moment. They also emphasized that there should not be any "definitive split of responsibilities" and arrangements should be worked out according to expertise. They found that the working relationship and the division of labour between UNICEF and the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) needed further clarification. They also mentioned that it was necessary to find out the expected cost involved for oversight services to be incurred by UNICEF and by OIOS. Some delegations also suggested that OIOS should coordinate and report on the oversight activities of United Nations bodies to give a full picture of organization-wide activities.

266. Some delegations suggested that UNICEF should take maximum advantage of the existing expertise of OIOS, while other delegations mentioned that cooperation with OIOS should not downgrade the role of UNICEF in the matter. The support of OIOS should be requested only when internal resources had been exhausted. In this connection, some delegations stated that they were unclear as to the needs of UNICEF and requested information on the UNICEF position on the OIOS recommendations and how they would affect UNICEF. Several delegations found that the cost associated with the internal oversight mechanisms could not be determined from the draft report and questions arose as to how this would affect UNICEF.

267. Some delegations pointed out that consultation with the governing bodies of the funds and programmes should have been held first, in accordance with United Nations General Assembly resolution 48/218 B of 29 July 1994, before circulating the draft report of the Secretary-General. They also requested the Executive Director to present a report describing the present capacity of UNICEF in internal audit and oversight (the Executive Director advised that an oral report will be presented to the Board at its 1996 annual session in June).

268. A number of delegations strongly emphasized that the monitoring and evaluation function should continue to remain with UNICEF and that UNICEF should strengthen its monitoring mechanism to ensure accountability. The lack of adequate and clearly identified reporting procedures from the oversight units to the governing bodies was acknowledged. While some delegations proposed that OIOS should coordinate this reporting, other delegations saw this as the responsibility of the Executive Director. Some delegations saw the need for periodic comprehensive reports and ad hoc reports on specific issues to be prepared for the consideration of the governing bodies. It was put forward that recommendations 6, 7 and 8 of the draft report should be reviewed in the context of the role of the Executive Board. They felt that

Executive Boards, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly should seriously undertake their oversight responsibilities.

269. Delegations felt that investigation capabilities were not well developed. There was no consensus on how this capability should be developed. Some delegations proposed that the operational funds and programmes should have there own investigation sections, while others saw this as the sole responsibility of OIOS. It was argued that OIOS should have prompt access to all records.

270. The Under-Secretary-General, OIOS, mentioned that OIOS would share experience with UNICEF through a meaningful dialogue and would not replace existing mechanisms. It could undertake investigations which were more relevant to UNICEF. OIOS would enhance the oversight mechanism of funds and programmes only in the areas where they did not have the capacity to perform. He added that the purview of OIOS has been spelt out in the relevant General Assembly resolution.

Progress report on the audit of the Kenya country office

271. The Executive Board had before it a progress report on the audit of the Kenya country office (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.4), which was introduced by Deputy Executive Director, Ms. Sham Poo, who also provided an additional oral report on progress since the drafting of the report.

272. Delegations found the report succinct but lacking in clarity in some areas. Progress to date vis-à-vis implementation of audit recommendations was therefore difficult to ascertain. It was also unclear what the future consequences were for the Kenya country programme. It was requested that future reports should, in a table format, show the 67 audit recommendations as well as indicating current progress and constraints.

273. One delegation requested the status of fraud charges against staff members and queried if any staff member had been successfully prosecuted.

Commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of UNICEF

274. The President of the Board submitted a draft decision on the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the operations of UNICEF (E/ICEF/1996/CRP.15) for Board approval. The draft contained a recommendation to the General Assembly that it allocate a plenary meeting during its fifty-first session in 1996 to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of UNICEF. There was also a request to the Executive Director that she make all the necessary preparations for this commemoration. It was a procedural decision in order to allow the General Assembly to take action upon the recommendation of the Economic and Social Council.

275. One delegation felt that the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary by the General Assembly was part of a programme of commemorations, and before taking a decision, requested the secretariat to inform delegations about what was planned for the 1996 annual session and what was the context of the other celebrations. The President of the Board confirmed that the meeting of the General Assembly was part of a whole series of commemorations, including the one for UNICEF.

276. Deputy Executive Director, Mr. Lewis, gave the following overview of the various events planned during the remainder of 1996: (a) fiftieth anniversary commemoration of UNICEF at the annual session on 19 June; (b) mid-decade goals, as well as some event with the Secretary-General and possibly the initiating countries of the World Summit for Children, on 30 September; and (c) the release of The State of the World's Children 1997 and request for the General Assembly to set aside a meeting consistent with the decisions on UNFPA and UNDP in similar situation, on 11 December.

277. With regard to the commemoration at the annual session, which the secretariat hoped was consistent with the Board's wishes, Deputy Executive Director, Mr. Lewis, presented the following tentative programme for the afternoon of 19 June: (a) a distinguished speaker to address the importance of the 50 years of UNICEF; (b) a performance by the United Nations International School choir; (c) a performance by a very respected children's orchestra, drawn primarily from Asian countries; and (d) a reception in the delegates' dining room to cap the afternoon's activities. (See the annex, decision 1996/18, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

Election of Executive Board representatives to the UNICEF/World Health Organization Joint Committee on Health Policy

278. In view of the expiry of Board membership of the Philippines, which had represented the Asian group on the UNICEF/WHO Joint Committee on Health Policy, and in accordance with decision 1994/R.2/2 (E/ICEF/1994/13/Rev.1), the Executive Board elected one new member and one new alternate from the Asian group to the Joint Committee (see the annex, decision 1996/19, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

Dates of Executive Board sessions

279. The President recalled to Board members that the original dates set for the 1996 annual session were from 3 to 7 June. However, because of the scheduling of the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements in Istanbul for the same period, the Bureau had suggested that the Executive Board meet from 17 to 21 June instead.

280. The President also was seeking Board approval of the proposed dates for 1997 Board sessions. An informal paper containing the proposed dates, which had been approved by the Bureau, had been circulated to Board members. (See the annex, decision 1996/20, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

Situation in Liberia

281. The Executive Director reported briefly on the situation of UNICEF staff in Liberia in the wake of renewed violence. The staff were trapped in the compound and were assisting some 300 people seeking asylum from the fighting. The compound was attacked, the office was entered and the staff were forced onto the roof. The staff were able to negotiate safe passage, and while many of the national staff went home, the international staff made it safely to the United States Embassy and were airlifted to Freetown, and then to Dakar. She had high praise for the officer-in-charge, Rosemary Fieth, who did an extraordinary job in getting the staff out safely. UNICEF was trying to assist national staff members there. She added that UNICEF was discussing preparations for a restaging operation and joining in the rapid international deployment.

H. Concluding remarks

282. In her closing statement, the Executive Director said that it had been a very productive meeting and thanked both individual delegations and the Board as a whole for their continuing commitment and strong leadership. She briefly reviewed some of the major accomplishments of the meeting. She assured delegations that nothing in the deliberations on the budget or management excellence should call into question the depth of the organization's unwavering and irreversible commitment to child survival and to its work in health generally. In fact, the purpose of the reorganization was to sustain and improve what was already being done in the field of health. The Board's full participation in the management excellence process was vitally important

and she looked forward to discussing it during the upcoming inter-sessional meeting on 29 April. The secretariat also took very seriously comments on the need to maintain Africa as its top regional priority and to participate fully in the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa. She thanked the Board again for its support and guidance.

283. The President of the Executive Board said that the main theme of the session had been one of dialogue, both between the secretariat and Board members and between the delegations themselves. The intense consultations on the integrated budget were an example of that ongoing dialogue and a step in the process of reform taking place through the United Nations system. The Board had adopted a number of important decisions, and in particular he noted the continued progress being made by the secretariat on MEP as well as the interest of Board members to be more engaged in the recommendations in the future. In that connection, he expressed appreciation for the willingness of the Executive Director to share with the Board a number of preliminary reports and recommendations at the informational meeting to be held on 29 May. The reports of the regional directors on recent events and, in particular, the Executive Director's report on the situation in Liberia reminded all Board members of the importance of the work done by UNICEF in the field. He said that as the fiftieth anniversary of UNICEF is commemorated, delegations should remember the courage of the staff of UNICEF and of the United Nations who face real dangers in assisting children threatened by war. Recalling that there would be a formal ceremony of the fiftieth anniversary of UNICEF at the annual session in June, the President hoped that all delegations would take an active part. In closing, he thanked the UNICEF secretariat staff as well as United Nations Conferences Services staff for their assistance during the session.

Part three

1996 ANNUAL SESSION

Held at United Nations Headquarters from 17 to 21 June 1996

I. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

A. Statements by the President of the Board and the Executive Director

284. The President said that this annual session had special significance because of the fiftieth anniversary of UNICEF. Members of the UNICEF family represented at the session - Government ministers and representatives, National Committees for UNICEF, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and UNICEF headquarters and field staff - had worked on behalf of the world's children and women for half a century, registering many important successes. The session would provide an opportunity to celebrate those achievements and to look to the future to determine how the Board can help UNICEF to meet the challenges of the next century.

285. The Executive Director said that the Executive Board had been providing guidance to the secretariat for 50 years, as UNICEF has changed from an "international children's emergency fund" focusing on relief for children in countries devastated by the Second World War, to an operational agency dedicated to the survival, development and, increasingly, the protection of children and women around the world. For 50 years, UNICEF, Governments and NGOs had worked together, forging strong partnerships on behalf of children and achieving dramatic improvements in their health and well-being. For 50 years, UNICEF field staff had worked in often difficult or dangerous conditions to provide services to children in need, and some had been killed while performing their duties. For 50 years, UNICEF had worked to earn the trust of its partners and the public at large in trying to fulfil its mission. (See E/ICEF/1996/CRP.19 for the full text of her remarks.)

B. Adoption of the agenda

286. The agenda of the session, as contained in document E/ICEF/1996/13, contained the following items:

Item 1: Opening statements by the President of the Board and the Executive Director

Item 2: Adoption of the provisional agenda and timetable and organization of work

Item 3: Report of the Executive Director

Item 4: Progress report on follow-up to the World Summit for Children

Item 5: Medium-term plan (MTP) for the period 1996-1999

Item 6: Review of UNICEF policies and strategies on child protection

Item 7: Conceptual framework for UNICEF emergency interventions

Item 8: Greeting Card and related Operations (GCO):

(a) GCO work plan and proposed budget for 1996

(b) GCO financial report and accounts for the year ended 30 April 1995

Item 9: Progress report on the Management Excellence Programme (MEP)

Item 10: Harmonization of budget presentations

Item 11: Draft report of the Secretary-General on enhancing internal oversight mechanisms in operational funds and programmes

Item 12: Update on the audit of the Kenya country office

Item 13: Reports on the meetings of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education (JCE) and the UNICEF/World Health Organization (WHO) Joint Committee on Health Policy (JCHP)

Item 14: Report of the Working Group on Documentation

Item 15: Other matters

Item 16: Concluding remarks by the Executive Director and the President of the Board

287. The Secretary of the Executive Board reviewed some of the revisions to the draft agenda that had been decided at the pre-session meeting on 24 May. There would be an election for the Vice-President from the Asian group of States. The ceremony for the recipient of the 1996 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award would be held on 19 June. The Chairperson of the Global Staff Association (GSA) would address the Board following the introduction of agenda item 9 on MEP. The agenda for the third regular session in September would be discussed under agenda item 15 "Other matters". He also advised Board members that there would be an informal meeting on 18 June on the World Congress Against Commercial Child Sexual Exploitation initiated by Mrs. Lisbet Palme. The agenda was then adopted.

288. In accordance with rule 50.2 and the annex of the Rules of Procedure, the Secretary of the Executive Board announced the observer delegations that had submitted credentials for the session and had advised the secretariat of the agenda items in which they had a special interest. They were (with the agenda items indicated, if any, shown in parentheses): Albania; Algeria (all); Armenia (3, 4, 5, 7); Australia; Austria (none); Bangladesh (all); Belarus; Belgium (all); Benin (all); Bosnia and Herzegovina; Botswana; Cape Verde; Colombia; Congo; Croatia; Czech Republic; Djibouti; Egypt; Eritrea; Finland; Germany (all); Guatemala; Guyana; Haiti; Holy See (all); Honduras; Ireland (all); Israel; Kazakstan (all); Latvia (all); Lesotho; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Malawi; Malta (all); Mexico (all); Mozambique; Nepal (all); New Zealand (3, 4, 5, 6, 7); Nicaragua; Nigeria; Panama; Poland (all); Portugal; Republic of Moldova; Slovakia; Slovenia; South Africa (all); Spain (all); Sudan; Swaziland; Syrian Arab Republic; Thailand; Turkmenistan; Yemen; and Zimbabwe.

289. In addition, the League of Arab States had submitted credentials, as had the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS); the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (7); the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (6); the World Food Programme; WHO; the Standing Group of National Committees for UNICEF (all); Anglican Consultative Council; Bahá'í International Community; Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University (4, 13); Caritas Internationalis; Catholic International Union for Social Service (6); Church World Service; Dhaka Ahsania Mission; International Association of Lions Clubs; International Catholic Child Bureau (6); International Committee of the Red Cross; International Council of Psychologists (6); International Council of Women; International Council on Social Welfare (3, 4, 6, 9, 10, 13); International Federation of Settlements and Neighbourhood Centres; International Federation of Social Workers (3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 12, 13); Pax Christi International (6); World Movement of Mothers (5, 6, 8); World Organization for Early Childhood Education (6, 7, 13); and NGO Committee on UNICEF (1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 16).

C. Election of officers of the Executive Board

290. The President announced that the Executive Board had agreed to the election of Dr. Hicham Hamdan (Lebanon) as Vice-President for the Asian group of States to replace Mrs. Mitra Vasisht (India), with immediate effect until the end of the present term.

291. On the nomination of the Western European and Other group of States, the Executive Board agreed to the election of Mr. Dino Beti (Switzerland) as Vice-President to replace Mr. Jan Top Christensen (Denmark), with effect from 1 July until the end of the present term.

II. DELIBERATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

A. Report of the Executive Director

292. The Executive Board had before it the report of the Executive Director (E/ICEF/1996/10 (Part I)), and a note prepared by the secretariat on some of the challenges faced by UNICEF in the past year and how they were addressed (E/ICEF/1996/CRP.24), both of which were introduced by the Executive Director.

293. Many delegations congratulated UNICEF on its fiftieth anniversary, praised the organization's accomplishments and spoke of the dedication of both UNICEF staff and National Committees. UNICEF had earned respect world-wide because it had made a positive difference in the lives of children, and one speaker read a special message from his country's President.

294. A number of delegations said that the note prepared by the secretariat was a useful supplement to the Executive Director's report because of its focus on child rights and on the continuing decline in donor contributions to general resources. Many speakers suggested that in future, the main report should be shorter, more "reader-friendly", of higher analytical quality and more strategic in the choice of topics covered. It should be concise and not repetitive or overlap with the content of other reports and it should use terminology that is consistent with standard terminology used by the United Nations, e.g., on gender.

295. Many delegations concurred with the report's emphasis on the continuing decline in contributions to general resources and urged Governments to increase those contributions. Contributions to general resources were vital, in particular as they preserved the multilateral character of UNICEF cooperation. Several delegations suggested that the criteria for the allocation of general resources be reviewed and made more transparent. One speaker stated that the allocation of general resources to countries should show the allocation per child and that the two most important criteria were the under-five mortality rate and the country's income. A delegation announced that it would increase its general resources contribution to UNICEF in 1997 by 33 per cent. Another speaker said that National Committees for UNICEF had grown in importance as fund-raisers for UNICEF, raising more than 30 per cent of its resources.

296. A delegation asked about the apparent increase in UNICEF administrative expenditures during 1995 as compared to 1994. Karin Sham Poo, Deputy Executive Director, said that there was a biennial budget for the period 1994-1995 and that expenditures for both years did not exceed the approved budget level. Some planned expenditure in 1994 had been deferred until 1995 to covers costs arising from implementation of the MEP and the move of some units to the Third Avenue office site.

297. Concerning MEP, one delegation expressed appreciation for the cultural change occurring within UNICEF, which was leading towards increased transparency and improved partnerships. Others expressed interest in the idea of decentralizing some strategic functions from headquarters to regional offices and in a more effective approach to teamwork throughout the organization. Some speakers said that the Executive Board should avoid micromanagement. One delegation asked when the Board would make decisions regarding specific MEP proposals. A delegation emphasized the need for improved coordination between the project teams responsible for the human resources strategy and for staff deployment, and another requested additional information about the scope of work on human resources matters with respect to MEP.

298. Many delegations commended the secretariat for the high quality of information and analysis found in the recent issue of The Progress of Nations, citing especially the chapters on maternal mortality and protein-energy malnutrition (PEM). The Executive Director concurred with the comments on PEM, stressing that the promotion of exclusive breast-feeding was a major strategic intervention towards reducing PEM. Speakers cited the favourable coverage given to the launch of the report and its positive reception by the general public. Several delegations suggested that data on maternal mortality and other subjects be verified prior to publication of the report. One speaker stated that the data presented in the Executive Director's report and in The Progress of Nations should be consistent.

299. Many delegations addressed the subject of progress towards achievement of the global goals for children and women, including linkages with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Several delegations complimented UNICEF on its contributions to the achievement of the goals, noting, *inter alia*, progress towards the eradication of polio and the elimination of guinea worm disease. One speaker stated that UNICEF had created recognition within the international community that goals with quantified targets were achievable and key to progress in social development. However, virtually all speakers said that much more remains to be done if the global goals are to be achieved by the year 2000 and in ways that are sustainable. Many delegations urged UNICEF to intensify its support, e.g., by employing additional programme strategies associated with the child rights approach; persuading countries to integrate children's needs into national decision-making processes; improving the diagnosis of key problems such as anaemia; and continuing to allocate substantial general resources to the "silent emergency". The linkage between the achievement of the global goals and efforts to mobilize resources for basic social services under the 20/20 initiative was noted by many delegations.

300. A number of delegations cited the value of the multiple indicator cluster survey (MICS), but urged UNICEF to assure that its use resulted in strengthening the capacities of national statistical services. Delegations also requested additional information on MICS, including its purpose, efficacy as a technical strategy and cost-effectiveness. Speakers stressed the overall importance of monitoring and evaluation and encouraged that these components be incorporated into the mainstream interventions of UNICEF with countries.

301. Delegations expressed support for the introduction by UNICEF of a rights-based approach to improving the situation of children and women. One delegation stated that the Convention on the Rights of the Child should be the sole framework for UNICEF programme policies. Several delegations highlighted the linkages between efforts of States Parties to implement the Convention and the fact that approximately 150 countries also were implementing national programmes of action (NPAs) which address both the global goals and child rights. Several delegations drew the same parallels with the implementation by States Parties of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. However, one delegation stated that in the case of the latter, UNICEF should play a more limited role as another United Nations agency was designated as the lead agency. Delegations requested that the report include information from reports of the Committee on the Rights of the Child. A speaker said that the Treaty Section of the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs should distribute the questionnaire on the subject of enlarging the Committee's membership.

302. Many delegations underscored the importance of the strategies related to capacity-building and sustainability. Several speakers requested additional information on the indicators used by UNICEF to assess the progress of

capacity-building at all levels of Government. Speakers emphasized the importance of UNICEF interventions with civil society, especially local-level organizations and communities, so that countries and communities would take responsibility and feel ownership for UNICEF-supported interventions such as the Bamako Initiative. Many delegations urged UNICEF to focus on the strategy related to social mobilization and to establish a more active presence at the community level. One delegation said that UNICEF should move beyond advocacy interventions on empowerment and address interventions which would generate more involvement of communities and civil society at large. Another delegation cited successful social mobilization through a recent mass rally of about 100,000 people in the country's capital to promote the rights of children.

303. A number of delegations stressed in particular UNICEF interventions which would address the issue of gender at both national and international levels. One delegation urged UNICEF to give more emphasis to the role of the mother instead of concentrating resources on specific interventions, such as the supply of vitamin A, because the quality of the life of the mother is closely associated with the quality of the life of the child. Another delegation stated that the rights of women are closely linked to the rights of children. Several delegations expressed support for the UNICEF strategy for follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women.

304. Addressing the subject of poverty alleviation, several delegations proposed that UNICEF associate such interventions with follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development. A speaker noted that the Secretary-General had designated 1996 as the Year of Poverty Alleviation and that the Decade of Poverty would begin from 1997, highlighting, inter alia, concerns about protecting children from the negative consequences of poverty. One speaker stated that the report of the Executive Director should reflect a new approach in which UNICEF demonstrates the use of multisectoral strategies and integrated programmes as major interventions to support poverty alleviation efforts. Other speakers urged UNICEF to continue to devote most of its financial resources to efforts that support poverty alleviation and to give priority to interventions involving capacity-building, sustainability, gender equality and monitoring and evaluation.

305. With respect to specific UNICEF programme interventions, a number of delegations stressed that priority should be given to women's health, reproductive health and youth health, citing the involvement of UNICEF in campaigns against the spread of HIV/AIDS and the promotion of environmental health. Other delegations requested that UNICEF support evaluations of the experiences gained in Africa with the Bamako Initiative to ensure its sustainability. The Executive Director said that the Bamako Initiative was not limited to countries in Africa, but was being implemented in countries in other regions. The Initiative was part of an overall approach that UNICEF supports which relates to development and the sustainability of primary health care (PHC) world-wide. A consultation between UNICEF and WHO in 1997 would focus on one major aspect of PHC, strengthening of district and local health systems. Another delegation asked when the secretariat would present to the Board the report containing the guidelines for implementation of the approved health strategy. The Executive Director said that the proposed guidelines would be presented in 1997 after the Board had reviewed an outline for the guidelines at its third regular session in September.

306. Several speakers referred to the importance of the meeting taking place in Amman, Jordan, on the assessment of progress towards the global goals for education. Delegations stressed the importance of girls' education and voiced their concern about the lack of progress in some countries.

307. Many delegations emphasized the importance of maintaining Africa as a high priority region, especially sub-Saharan Africa. Speakers urged UNICEF to focus on integrated planning to improve health care and reduce under-five mortality. Many delegations expressed appreciation for the commitment and involvement of UNICEF in the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa, but said that it should not result in a diversion of resources from the priority interventions of country programmes of cooperation.

308. Several delegations stated that the report did not sufficiently highlight developments in the Middle East and North Africa region. Several other speakers expressed appreciation for UNICEF support to Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States.

309. Many delegations stressed the importance of coordination between United Nations agencies, specifically within the context of General Assembly resolutions 47/199 of 22 December 1992 and 48/162 of 20 December 1993. Some speakers stated that each agency's interest remained a constraint to more effective coordination of activities. Several speakers requested that the report include more information on activities related to the resident coordinator system and operational activities for development. One speaker emphasized the importance of more resident coordinators being drawn from UNICEF staff. Several delegations requested additional information on the process of working with partners, including the constraints, and underscored the importance of lessons learned at the field level.

310. Many delegations expressed views on various aspects of child protection, including exploitation, children in armed conflict, child soldiers, domestic violence, crime, child labour, children not attending school, sexual abuse and trafficking. Referring to the report on children in need of special protection measures (see paragraphs 350-352 below), delegations underlined the importance of UNICEF advocacy with Governments on the protection of all children. One delegation said that the UNICEF approach should not become too narrow and legalistic, but should remain holistic, taking into account the socio-economic needs that have to be met so that child rights can be realized. Another said that the concept of child rights encompassed all children, and that there was also a need for special protection for children in especially difficult circumstances. Several delegations said that urbanization affects many such children and referred to both HABITAT II and the International Conference on Population and Development. The Executive Director confirmed that UNICEF took a broad, holistic approach to child rights, agreeing that the concept of child rights involved special protection measures for children in especially difficult circumstances.

311. Several delegations expressed appreciation for the global role of UNICEF in advocating for child rights, including with industrialized countries; its use of advocacy against war and to promote peace; and various efforts, including "corridors of tranquility" and advocacy for the abolition of anti-personnel land-mines, to protect children from armed conflict. One delegation suggested that more well-defined activities should be identified.

312. With respect to UNICEF emergency programmes, a number of delegations said that there was further scope for collaboration between UNICEF and the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA). One speaker said that UNICEF should address the needs of children affected by war and natural disasters. Another delegation praised UNICEF work in education during emergencies. It was suggested that the conceptual framework for the UNICEF role in emergencies needed to be strengthened with respect to the provisions of Economic and Social Council resolution 95/56 of 28 July 1995. One delegation requested additional information on coordination and the division

of labour and responsibilities among United Nations organizations. Several speakers expressed concern that UNICEF had to respond to 21 emergency situations during 1995, saying that this large demand should involve a cooperative approach with other United Nations agencies.

B. Progress report on follow-up to the World Summit for Children

313. The Executive Board had before it the progress report on follow-up to the World Summit for Children (E/ICEF/1996/15), which was introduced by the Executive Director. Several delegations commented that the progress report was a valuable preview to the Secretary-General's report on progress towards the goals of the World Summit for Children, to be presented to the General Assembly on 30 September 1996.

314. A number of delegations commended UNICEF for its leadership in organizing the World Summit, in assisting countries in developing NPAs and in monitoring progress towards the World Summit goals. A combination of national and international commitments were necessary to continue the outstanding work of UNICEF and to achieve the goals. Many delegations spoke in favour of the goals as the central focus of UNICEF efforts and expressed satisfaction with achievements made by the majority of countries. However, more attention should now be given to capacity-building to ensure the sustainability of the advancements made.

315. There was overall support for the mid-decade review. It was hoped that the Secretary-General's report would provide a clear and accurate picture on the situation of children at both global and individual country levels. Some delegations agreed that the review was not an end in itself, and one delegation proposed that global goals should be reviewed in the context of national realities. Another speaker stated that all countries should complete the mid-decade review in 1996 and formulate strategies for children for the coming five years.

316. Many delegations spoke favourably of UNICEF efforts to monitor and evaluate progress towards the World Summit goals and noted that national reviews were essential to the global mid-decade review. UNICEF was encouraged to cooperate and collaborate more closely with national and international partners in monitoring and evaluating progress towards the goals. The secretariat responded that UNICEF has been stressing partnerships and cooperating with Governments, NGOs, international organizations, institutions and centres of excellence in developing indicators and conducting surveys. It shared updated information with the Board on MICS carried out in different countries and regions.

317. Several delegations provided updated information on national reviews in their countries and thanked UNICEF for its active involvement and technical and financial assistance to conduct more reviews. A speaker said that the information contained in the document on his country in annex IV was outdated, as his country had already completed and approved its NPA. Another speaker mentioned the upcoming meeting of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, which would be an important opportunity for the region to review progress and refocus efforts on children.

318. Delegations urged the secretariat to encourage and coordinate cross-country and regional cooperation, including with other United Nations agencies and international financial institutions. Another delegation expressed concern about lack of data in her country and addressed the need to improve local capacity for monitoring and evaluation. A number of delegations

stressed that poverty was the root of many social problems and requested UNICEF to continue its support to income-generating activities, especially for women, and to focus on capacity-building and empowerment to sustain achievements.

319. One delegation was concerned that Africa lagged behind other regions in progress towards the World Summit goals and urged the secretariat to continue to support Africa as its priority region. The delegation asked the secretariat to find ways to enable African countries to become "owners" of development. The same speaker expressed concern about maternal mortality and encouraged the secretariat to stress women's health and women's overall role in social development. Another speaker commented that the maternal mortality rate (MMR) remained high because the approaches were vertical and, therefore, unable to deal with more complicated causes of maternal mortality.

320. One delegation requested the secretariat to strengthen its cooperation with other related United Nations agencies at the field level. The delegation also spoke about the role of NGOs and the private sector which was inadequately addressed in the report.

321. One delegation expressed dissatisfaction with the generality of indicators, as they did not reflect disparity. The delegation requested UNICEF to identify adequate indicators for monitoring progress. A few delegations expressed concern about the appropriateness and accuracy of data and figures used in publications. Two delegations said that the new method of estimating MMR was confusing and asked the secretariat to clarify the method used. One speaker urged UNICEF to pay closer attention to the quality of data and data sources and said that data used should reflect actual situations. The secretariat replied that it would organize an informal session for delegations to clarify the new method of estimating MMR.

322. One delegation endorsed the importance of the mid-decade review and proposed that countries should make financial commitments to the review. The delegation expressed an interest in the cost implications of the review and hoped that quantitative as well as qualitative aspects of progress would be emphasized equally. Two delegations shared the concern of the Executive Director on progress made and reports by industrial countries. The secretariat said that there was no budget for the review, but that it was keeping track on the cost of MICS. Currently, monitoring focused more on quantitative rather than qualitative aspects of progress, and it was hoped that this would be improved in the future. (See the annex, decision 1996/21, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

C. Medium-term plan for the period 1996-1999

Programmatic issues

323. The Executive Board had before it the MTP for the period 1996-1999 (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.10), which was introduced by the Executive Director. There was overall support for the MTP. Many delegations said that it provided guidelines, strategies and policies for operations and programmes in line with Board decisions.

324. A delegation said that the MTP should be revised based on the results of the mid-decade review. Others said that the MTP did not list detailed objectives nor were there any benchmarks to facilitate monitoring and evaluation of programmes. They expected specific objectives be incorporated in the next plan. In response to a comment that the MEP process was not fully

reflected in the MTP, the Executive Director said that the MEP process was discussed in a separate report (see paragraphs 381-406 below). The MEP process has recommended the establishment of a Quality Assurance Group to set quality assurance standards in all aspects of UNICEF work and a mechanism to monitor and assess them.

325. Many delegations supported the emphasis given to country programmes. Several speakers supported adapting country programmes to local, regional or subregional needs and considered this the most valuable asset of UNICEF.

326. Delegations encouraged UNICEF to assist countries to meet both the needs and rights of children. Several speakers suggested that the role of UNICEF in relation to the Convention on the Rights of the Child be discussed within the United Nations system as a whole. UNICEF was requested to increase its collaboration with other United Nations agencies in areas related to the Convention. According to one delegation, the MTP gave the impression that the needs-based and rights-based approaches were in competition with each other while, in fact, they were equally important. Survival and development, like health and education, were fundamental rights. The delegation said that there should be criteria to determine priorities and allocate funds to meet the needs of children and for advocacy for their rights. Advocacy should be based on partnership, sound analysis and the active participation of civil society. It was suggested that UNICEF work with the Committee on the Rights of the Child be carefully examined. Another speaker, supported by others, proposed that discussions be held on the definition of a child under 18 years of age and its implications for programming.

327. A number of delegations referred to the link between the MTP and the Mission Statement. Two delegations said that the World Summit goals, which were far more concrete than rights, should form the conceptual framework of the MTP, not the Mission Statement. The secretariat replied that the World Summit goals remained a priority for UNICEF.

328. A few delegations emphasized the basic rights of child survival and development in developing countries, adding that poverty alleviation was fundamental to meeting both the needs and the rights of children. A number of speakers commented that poverty alleviation should be the framework of action and should be incorporated into the MTP and country programmes.

329. Many delegations endorsed the strategies, overarching aim of empowerment and programming focuses of the MTP. The importance of the catalytic role of UNICEF in providing basic social services was emphasized. Efficiency, capacity-building and empowerment were also stressed by several speakers who requested information on specific strategies developed by UNICEF to increase national capacities. A few speakers said that strategies should be adapted to country and regional conditions, while another speaker said that the MTP contained working methods to implement sectoral strategies approved by the Board and not real strategies.

330. Many delegations supported the major fields of activities outlined in the plan, but one said that these were inadequately defined. Several delegations called for greater support to education and suggested that educational methods be evaluated and the quality of education monitored. UNICEF was urged to focus on the needs of the girl child and to involve women in the fight against poverty, malnutrition and food shortages. A few speakers suggested that more attention be paid to children in especially difficult circumstances and children in emergency situations, and recommended that armed conflicts be monitored. Another speaker supported the UNICEF approach in Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the

Baltic States and said that more attention should go to children in countries in transition. One delegation said that since UNICEF could not do everything, the setting of priorities was very important.

331. Many delegations expressed concern about the trend of declining resources to Africa, especially West and Central Africa. They also expressed support for the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa. In response to queries on how the Special Initiative for Africa fit into the MTP and what UNICEF would contribute to the Initiative, the secretariat said that a separate briefing would be organized later in the week for Board members on the UNICEF response to the Initiative.

332. A number of delegations stressed that strategic planning and evaluation were essential to achieve goals and sustain progress. Lessons learned from immunization and other programmes in the past should be applied in achieving the World Summit goals. One delegation proposed that key indicators be developed for monitoring and evaluation. One speaker mentioned that the impact of efficiency was not adequately emphasized in the MTP and requested the secretariat to monitor programme efficiency and effectiveness. Several delegations encouraged UNICEF to develop quantitative targets and create benchmarks to measure progress and allocate funds. The secretariat responded that UNICEF would learn lessons from the mid-decade review and from country programmes and would continue to improve strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation of quantitative as well as qualitative aspects of progress.

333. Two delegations encouraged UNICEF to work more closely with partners, especially Governments, communities and families. UNICEF was urged to collaborate with the International Labour Organisation in the campaign against child labour. A few delegations encouraged UNICEF to promote South-South cooperation.

334. Several speakers said that they fully agreed with the guiding principles of human resources development. Teamwork and a people-centred approach were essential for sustainability. UNICEF was encouraged to develop policies on gender and geographic balance of human resources and on staff recruitment. In response to concerns raised about the cost of human resources, the secretariat said that such costs would be closely monitored and reminded Board members that the quality of programmes depended on the quality of people, and investment was needed to raise the quality and competence of staff members.

335. One delegation said that the three criteria used by UNICEF in allocating its general resources were good, but inadequate, and that more valuable and mixed indicators should be identified to allocate resources more equally. Another delegation expressed mixed views about using the criteria and requested information on quality control measures in using programme funds. One speaker said that while the Mission Statement said that priorities would go to the most disadvantaged children and the countries in greatest need, this was not reflected in resource allocations, especially to African countries. While expressing appreciation for the criteria, one delegation suggested that when using gross national product per capita, UNICEF should also consider disparities in communities. Another delegation said that the allocation of resources should be based on priorities set by recipient Governments. The secretariat shared Board members' concerns and said that the criteria should be objective, understandable and fair. The secretariat looked forward to discussions on resource allocation at the September session.

336. Many delegations expressed concern about the decline of general resources and urged the secretariat to develop strategies to increase contributions to general resources. They also called on industrialized

countries in particular to increase commitments to general resources. It was suggested that given the fact that donor contributions to general resources had declined, the secretariat should try increasingly to raise resources in countries with fund-raising potential. While one speaker welcomed the secretariat's efforts in considering some middle-income countries as potential donors, another said that UNICEF should be careful not to withdraw too soon from some middle-income countries because opportunities to consolidate achievements in these countries might be lost. He suggested that regional disparities be adequately considered in phasing out assistance to countries. One speaker said that the 20/20 initiative deserved serious consideration in the MTP. The Executive Director replied that a working group had been set up to review various aspects of issues related to resources.

337. One delegation asked whether UNICEF would support a third kind of presence in countries in addition to country offices and National Committees. The delegation supported the importance given to National Committees and hoped that UNICEF would improve its collaboration with them. The Executive Director welcomed the comments and said that UNICEF had held some healthy and frank discussions with National Committees on increasing general resources. The type of UNICEF presence in a country was based on the local situation; it could be a full country office, a self-financed office or a National Committee.

Financial medium-term plan for the period 1996-1999

338. One delegation asked what criteria were used to allocate administrative and programme support funds to field offices. The secretariat explained that all field offices with regular country programmes had their administrative and programme support costs funded from the administrative and programme support budget. Liaison offices and offices with shorter-term programmes had, for the time being, their programme support costs charged to the programme budget. When the integrated budget was prepared for the entire organization, the basis of allocation would be made clear, with harmonized definitions for programme assistance, programme support and management and administration.

339. One delegation asked if MEP would produce "efficiency dividends" and if such dividends could be quantified and monitored. Another delegation said that the MTP did not sufficiently take into account MEP initiatives such as decentralization to field offices and the strengthened role of internal audit. The secretariat stated that MEP should enable UNICEF to have a more effective and efficient organization and it continued to aim at maximizing resources available for county programmes. Some investments in staff training and new systems would be necessary in the short term to achieve future efficiencies. Savings from streamlining in the recently approved integrated budget for headquarters and regional offices had been used to cover the costs of the Programme Manager System (PROMS), the United Nations Integrated Management Information System and the regional office for Central Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States.

340. One delegation said that the section of the financial medium-term plan comparing the financial performance for 1995 to the plan was straightforward and easy to understand. However, a summary table would make the variances from the plan even clearer.

341. One delegation asked why emergency contributions were expected to decline. The secretariat said that it sincerely hoped the assumption of fewer emergencies proved to be correct. However, emergency contributions were very difficult to forecast because of the unpredictable nature of emergencies.

342. Many delegations were concerned about the slow growth forecast in general resources and the increasing proportion of UNICEF income coming from supplementary funds contributions. Several delegations said that general resources were the most important component of country programmes and stressed the importance of multilateral assistance. One delegation said that the decline in general resources could harm the attainment of the goals for the year 2000 and encouraged donor countries to support UNICEF in implementing the MTP. Another delegation said that the declining share of general resources was a threat to meaningful planning. While congratulating UNICEF on maintaining high donor support in times of fiscal restraint, one delegation suggested that general resources fund-raising could be enhanced by more transparent reporting on the use of general resources. Several delegations suggested that the secretariat formulate fund-raising strategies to increase general resources contributions. The secretariat said that a multi-divisional/multi-office working group was examining fund-raising issues, including the question of how to provide better and clearer information to donors. The secretariat also drew the attention of delegations to document E/ICEF/1996/CRP.20, which showed how much each donor is contributing to general resources and supplementary funds.

343. Some delegations said that UNICEF should encourage fund-raising in developing countries for use in the same countries. One delegation agreed with this, but cautioned that UNICEF should still put its priority on fund-raising in donor countries. Another delegation agreed since the generation of funds in-country through the private sector was not feasible in some countries. Because achievements might not yet be consolidated, one delegation cautioned UNICEF to not withdraw financial support from countries too soon. One delegation said that whatever presence UNICEF had in a country, the country itself must be consulted.

344. Asked if there was a strategy to increase the fund-raising capacity of National Committees, the secretariat said that it was continuing to work closely with them. As an example, the secretariat said that there was a good open discussion between National Committees and UNICEF at their recent Annual Meeting at which many strategies were discussed, including the need to raise additional general resources.

345. One delegation said that staff costs should not increase at the expense of country programmes. The secretariat agreed, but also observed that the programmatic mix was changing over time, and in some countries where UNICEF was now mainly providing technical advisory assistance, people constituted the programme. In those instances, the quality of the people determined the quality of the programmes.

346. Some delegations noted that the financial medium-term plan assumed a growth rate of 2 per cent in administrative and programme support costs for 1998 and 1999. Some suggested that there should be a no growth assumption for those expenditures. One delegation said that substantial savings could be made through organizational change. The secretariat said that the MTP was not a budget authorization document but a planning document, and there would be time for the Executive Board to discuss fully the integrated budgets for 1998 and 1999 when they were presented to the Executive Board in 1997. While trying to keep administrative and programme support costs to a minimum, the secretariat still felt that it was prudent to show a 2 per cent growth because even with fewer staff, overall staff costs could rise when the United Nations increased salary scales, including salaries for local field office staff. A 2 per cent growth assumption was less than the assumed inflation rate.

347. Two delegations said that they supported the strengthening of human resources management, especially the idea of using teams.

348. One delegation supported the use of information technology and noted that although an initial investment might be required, it would lead to efficiency later.

349. One delegation said that the secretariat should continue to keep general resources cash balances at the liquidity guideline levels. The secretariat noted that the general resources cash balances had decreased and now it would be important to maintain adequate resources. (See the annex, decision 1996/26, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

D. Review of UNICEF policies and strategies on child protection

350. The Executive Board discussed the review of UNICEF policies and strategies on child protection (E/ICEF/1996/14) under agenda item 6. The report was introduced by Stephen Lewis, Deputy Executive Director. Many delegations addressed this agenda item.

351. The report was well received, and several delegations praised the high quality of the paper in terms of historical perspective, analysis and its emphasis on a cross-sectoral approach. Moreover, there was strong support in the Board for the child rights perspective guiding the proposed programme strategies and the synergy with overall implementation efforts for the Convention on the Rights of the Child. A number of delegations noted, however, that there is need for further clarification of the overall role of UNICEF in implementation of the Convention. It was pointed out that child protection encompasses all children, whereas the paper is specifically concerned with children in extreme situations of abuse, neglect or exploitation. Consequently, it was proposed that the term "child protection" be replaced by the term "children in need of special protection measures". In this regard, cooperation with other partners, including support to the work of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, was stressed.

352. With regard to the strategies outlined in the paper, a number of delegations endorsed the paper as providing an appropriate framework for the development of specific strategies based on a broadened situation analysis process, best practice and research. Several delegations indicated that a report on relevant programmatic approaches and implementation plans would be welcome as they are developed. In this connection, concerns related to UNICEF capacities to enhance responses to children in need of special protection measures were raised. (See the annex, decision 1996/27, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

E. Conceptual framework for UNICEF emergency interventions

353. The Executive Board had before it a report on "A conceptual framework for UNICEF emergency interventions" (E/ICEF/1996/16). The Executive Director made some introductory remarks, which were followed by a short introduction of the report by the Director of the Office of Emergency Programmes, who emphasized the importance of the role of the family in determining child vulnerability and well-being, and the concomitant implications for UNICEF emergency interventions.

354. Reactions of the delegations to the paper varied. A number of delegations expressed appreciation for the quality of the paper, noting that

it was concise and specific. Several other delegations stated that the conceptual framework was too general in scope and expressed the hope that the some clarification would emerge from the eight operational papers. One speaker noted that the precise purpose of the paper had not been sufficiently clarified, and others felt that there was a difference of perception between the Board delegations themselves and the secretariat as to what was requested.

355. One speaker said that his delegation would revisit the guiding principles and methodology of UNICEF after receipt of all the operational papers.

356. Many delegations noted that the paper did not adequately address UNICEF cooperation, coordination and collaboration with other United Nations partners, especially with DHA. They strongly urged that this be covered in the forthcoming papers. One delegation applauded UNICEF work with NGOs in the field, whereas others requested an enunciation of UNICEF-assisted projects undertaken by NGOs. One speaker requested that UNICEF make its Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with UNHCR and other partners more specific. Other speakers noted that there was a need to include the comparative advantage of UNICEF with respect to other agencies.

357. One delegation asked that the paper include a clear definition of emergencies, and a number of other delegations requested a need to include other kinds of emergencies apart from armed conflicts, especially "silent emergencies", that were associated with poverty-related issues. Others expressed the need for clearer articulation of emergency and development projects and stressed the inclusion of systematic evaluations of UNICEF projects. One delegation remarked that the paper needed to examine sustainable development and focus on continuity of action as emergency situations continued long after conflicts had ceased. Another speaker mentioned that the document should link emergencies to long-term goals and strategies and cover the transition to the rehabilitation phase.

358. One speaker requested the inclusion of a conceptual distinction between UNICEF actions in emergencies and the protection of children in especially difficult circumstances. He continued that what was also needed was an elaboration of the circumstances under which UNICEF would be assuming responsibility for the needs and protection of children, and questioned how UNICEF would capitalize on its mandate to ensure the survival, protection and development of children - especially refugee and returnee children. Another speaker requested the addition of a chapter on "analysing causes and identifying protection" to be taken into account when redrafting the conceptual framework. One delegation said that the response to deliberate targeting of children, their rape, and physical and psycho-social trauma should move beyond emergency action to the larger area of protection. Another delegation raised the question as to what would be undertaken by UNICEF in order to prevent emergencies from occurring.

359. Some delegations expressed concern about the proportion of overall resources assigned to emergencies and how UNICEF would set its resource mobilization priorities.

360. Two delegations mentioned that emergency actions should have Government support and assist local governments. Another speaker noted that many countries had no plan of action for emergencies and asked UNICEF to explain its role of advocate, especially in sensitive situations.

361. Several delegations requested further clarification of selected paragraphs in the paper. One delegation noted that paragraphs 13, 14 and 16

had little to do with natural disasters and another suggested that paragraphs 4 and 9 include internally displaced persons and unaccompanied children. Some delegations asked that paragraph 8 exclude reference to the earlier paper presented at the first regular session in January.

362. One speaker questioned how UNICEF would address the factors causing political instability in its forthcoming papers. Another delegation pronounced the need for international assistance to assist in the resettlement of internally displaced families.

363. Many delegations suggested that they would like to receive the papers well in advance of the Board so that their comments could be included before finalization. In that connection, one delegation noted that since a few donor Governments shared the disproportional burden of providing aid for emergencies, they hoped that their comments would be taken into account before finalization of the operational papers.

364. The Director of the Office of Emergency Programmes thanked the delegations for their constructive comments. He said that the report was a part of an ongoing process and that different components of the process were to be presented at future Board sessions. He assured delegations that all papers would be presented to them in advance and that the conceptual framework would be linked to the operational papers.

365. Responding specifically to the series of comments made by the various delegations, the Director assured them that the papers would elucidate the various types of emergencies, the role of UNICEF in emergency situations and its relationship with DHA in the areas of coordination and cooperation. He assured delegations that the papers would examine common concerns of children affected by poverty and loud emergencies and would attempt to draw upon linkages from both. The papers would examine mechanisms aimed at strengthening UNICEF collaborative efforts with other agencies and NGOs, and would include UNICEF analysis and assessment processes focusing on the needs and rights of children. The papers would incorporate causes of disruption, displacement and threats to health which are common to children and would be presented as quickly as possible. He also assured delegations that UNICEF would continue to work with national authorities, but also where Governments no longer had de facto control, UNICEF would continue to work with community groups and local authorities.

366. The Director noted the comments made with regard to paragraph 8 and promised that further clarification would follow. He recognized that given the long-term presence before, during and after emergencies, there was a strong need to focus on early warning and preparedness, and assured delegations that UNICEF would continue to play a role in the post-conflict phase. Finally, he informed that UNICEF looked forward to a process of discussion with Board members prior to the next session. (See the annex, decision 1996/28, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

F. Greeting Card and related Operations

367. The Executive Board had before it the GCO work plan and proposed budget for 1996 (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.11) for approval, and the GCO financial report and accounts for the year ended 30 April 1995 (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.12). The first document included a draft resolution to change the GCO fiscal year from 1 May-30 April to 1 January-31 December.

368. The reports were introduced by the Acting Director, GCO, who also made a presentation on GCO, its performance in the past year and its key strategies and objectives for 1996. The presentation outlined the positive changes taking place in GCO, including the recruitment of a new Director, who is expected to join the division in August or September 1996. The secretariat is making the final selection of a private sector consultant company to undertake the external review of UNICEF cards and products. The company selected will have a presence in both Europe and North America, and the Acting Director, GCO, outlined the scope of the review.

369. The Acting Director, GCO, thanked the tens of thousands of volunteers for their pivotal role in the success of card and product sales and in raising the profile of UNICEF. Through advocacy work they have helped to contribute to a better understanding in industrialized countries of the needs of children and women in developing countries and to global solidarity. Many delegations also praised the work of volunteers world-wide.

370. Many speakers commended GCO and its staff for income generated during the past fiscal year in association with its sales partners and the resulting revenue growth achieved. More than 30 per cent of total UNICEF income is mobilized through GCO. One delegation said that GCO is one of the means by which UNICEF can generate funds, improve education and mobilize people throughout the world for the benefit of children.

371. Several delegations noted that the majority of net income, in both absolute and percentage terms, was generated from private sector fund-raising. In those countries where the potential for private sector fund-raising exists, but is prohibited, it was recommended that the Executive Director be given the power to intervene.

372. Many delegations expressed concern that greeting card and product sales are stagnating despite the fact that there is capacity for sales growth, and the question was raised as to whether stagnation was industry-wide. Several delegations expressed concern at decreasing profitability and increasing operating costs. Other delegations thanked GCO for its efforts to address problem areas that had been raised by the Executive Board in the past, such as improved service to customers and the adoption of a more consultative and supportive stance towards National Committees.

373. Several delegations said that the GCO name is no longer appropriate and that management should consider changing the name to properly reflect its activities.

374. Although the substantial part of GCO income from product sales is generated from markets served by the Geneva office, more staff are located in New York. Several speakers were of the opinion that GCO staff should be located where decision-making involving major business partners and markets takes place. One delegation noted that regional support centre operations may not be cost-effective and requested that GCO management study the value of their continued presence.

375. Some delegations recommended that future GCO work plan and budget documents be shorter, more user-friendly, business-like and transparent. Some speakers said that the document placed too much emphasis on the number of greeting cards sold in relation to the amount of income generated from this activity. They requested a greater focus on priorities and new developments.

376. One delegation said that they had shifted emphasis from supplementary funds to general resources and urged other National Committees to do likewise.

They offered support to the secretariat to take action on this issue and requested it to provide National Committees with information on UNICEF programmes funded from both general resources and supplementary funds.

377. On the change of the GCO fiscal year, many delegations supported the GCO proposal in the interest of enhanced transparency, despite the fact that the figures from card and products sales would reflect provisional results. In this context, one delegation said that such a change should be made only on the understanding that it could be worked out practically by accountants and auditors.

378. Many delegations welcomed the external review of UNICEF cards and products and hoped that it would be intrusive and all-encompassing, with a special focus on the structures and processes based on best industry practices in order to help the UNICEF Executive Board assess future growth and find ways to further maximize the income from the sale of cards and products. It was requested that the review be carried out in consultation with National Committees which should also be kept informed of the outcome.

379. In response to questions on the external review of UNICEF cards and products, the Director, GCO, confirmed that the review will begin in July. It will focus essentially on cards and products. The processes are complex and highly specialized and need careful review in order to be accelerated and streamlined. However, it is hoped that both GCO income-generating areas would be strengthened by the outcome of the review. Any proposed changes in the structure of GCO in relation to cards and products will take into account the interface with the Private Sector Fund-raising group. The Acting Director, GCO, said that many topics raised by delegations at the present session, such as stagnating sales of cards and products, parameters for both Market Development Programme and Fund-raising Development Programme funds, the viability of the 50 per cent profitability target, improved structures to accelerate and streamline operations, best industry practices, maximizing return on investments, reducing operational costs and location of operations would be studied in the context of the external review. An oral status report will be presented to the Executive Board at its regular third session in September as the final report is expected to be completed only in late autumn/early winter.

380. Many delegations and the Executive Director thanked the Acting Director, GCO, for accepting the position at short notice and for providing valuable leadership to GCO staff. The Executive Director also expressed her thanks to delegations for their constructive comments and expressed the hope that all UNICEF consultancies would provide guidance that, together with strong management and leadership, would allow UNICEF to move forward in a positive way. (See the annex, decision 1996/22, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

G. Progress report on the Management Excellence Programme

381. The Executive Director introduced the progress report (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.9), informing the Board that management excellence project teams had completed their work, signifying the end of the proposal development phase, and that much of the responsibility for moving forward with management excellence could now be transferred to line managers throughout the organization. Since this document was prepared, significant meetings had taken place, including the Annual Meeting of National Committees, the Executive Board inter-sessional and individual briefings with Board members, from which the secretariat had greatly benefited.

382. On the role of regional offices, the Executive Director reminded the Board that UNICEF has always been a decentralized organization and that proposals coming forward are not about creating new structures. UNICEF has regional offices in seven regions, six of which have been in existence for some time. She clarified that UNICEF is trying to ensure that its structures support and strengthen country programmes. The Executive Director expressed her strong belief on the need for regional offices in the field close to where the action is. Proposals will be made to clarify the role of those offices in order to give them clearly defined accountability for the overall performance of offices in each region and the responsibility to provide the technical and managerial support that country offices need. It is envisaged that this will also create a more realistic span of supervision throughout the organization and reinforce the principle that decisions must be taken closest to the action. The Executive Director stated that the ultimate aim is to strengthen the development and monitoring of country programmes and ensure that they reflect country and regional priorities within the overall parameters of global policies. She highlighted that by clarifying the role of regional offices, UNICEF will also be able to streamline the New York office so that it can focus on those things that are appropriately the role of headquarters: shaping the strategic programme vision of the organization and evaluating the programme experience; developing the standards for the sound management of all UNICEF assets; providing leadership for effective human resources practices; monitoring organizational performance; ensuring global connectivity and the systems to support a decentralized organization; developing strategic partnerships and mobilizing resources at the global level to support the organization's work for children; and maintaining the inter-agency relationships that are essential for UNICEF as a member of the United Nations family. The Executive Director assured members of the Board that she is committed to implementing the reforms within overall existing budget ceilings.

383. The Chairperson of GSA addressed the meeting after which several delegations expressed appreciation for staff commitment to ensuring the success of MEP. References were made by many delegations on the critical importance of staff participation as a necessary element for bringing about changes. One delegation inquired whether improvements in staff morale had occurred, to which the secretariat responded that efforts were under way to improve morale through fostering of more collegial relationships, working in teams, and staff involvement in the global, regional and country management teams.

384. A number of delegations expressed their positive appraisal of the report on progress made to date. They appreciated the references made linking Booz•Allen & Hamilton recommendations with management excellence activities and the timetable outlining when recommendations will be brought to the Board for policy discussion and budgetary decisions. A few speakers questioned why the timetable was not more explicit, with clearer cross-references to the body of the report.

385. Several speakers expressed appreciation for the secretariat's efforts to engage the Board in ongoing dialogue on management excellence, making special reference to inter-sessional meetings and individual briefings. One delegation stated that there had been a radical change in credibility of the secretariat owing to the consultative process employed. Other speakers expressed appreciation for MEP being a highly consultative process with UNICEF staff, National Committees and the Executive Board.

386. One delegation was concerned with the slow pace of translating Booz•Allen & Hamilton recommendations into action. Another delegation requested that efforts be made to accelerate progress, especially in relation to clarifying roles and accountabilities of headquarters, regional and country offices.

387. Many delegations acknowledged progress in specific areas such as integrated budgets, consolidation of publications functions, reduction in headquarters expenditures, PROMS, better coordination in the United Nations system and cooperation with UNAIDS. The work on integrated budgets was described as facilitating better management of resources and enhanced transparency. One speaker requested early implementation of PROMS organization-wide for improved programme management, accountability and transparency. Another speaker expressed caution on the reliance on global connectivity in countries with unreliable levels of technologies.

388. One delegation praised results to date on the UNICEF MEP, describing it as unique within the United Nations system, thereby providing a reference point for overall United Nations reform.

389. A few speakers were pleased with office-level initiatives for management improvements. One delegation inquired whether networking systems had been established for offices to see what others are doing and for accessing guidelines for office improvement plans. Another speaker expressed appreciation for significant improvements in the UNICEF office located in his country, resulting in the reduction of 40 posts and substantial savings redirected into programmes. Two delegations suggested that attention be paid to ensure harmony between office improvement initiatives and overall management excellence objectives. One speaker stated that attention should be paid to improvements in country offices in terms of information technology strategies, the introduction of PROMS and integrated budgets. Another delegation highlighted the office improvements efforts as good mechanisms for improving staff morale and efficiencies.

390. Several speakers expressed support for the existing decentralized structure of UNICEF with the country programme at its core. Clearly defined roles for headquarters and regional offices, which add value and avoid duplication with country offices, was seen as a sound approach. A number of delegations requested further clarification and debate on the proposed role and functions of the regional offices. Two speakers felt that regional bureaux should be in New York, allowing experts to serve several regions at the same time, thus avoiding duplication; but several others felt that regional offices should remain in the regions. Three speakers expressed hesitation on the supervision of country representatives by regional directors, with one suggesting that this could only be effective if regional offices have oversight functions on the use of funds. One speaker questioned whether there are changes anticipated in the number and location of regional offices, to which the secretariat responded that no changes were foreseen in the number or location of regional offices at the present time.

391. One delegation requested that the role of regional offices be clearly explained in terms of value added to the country programme. A speaker asked for an analysis of how the roles and functions of the country office would be helped or affected by proposals on the role of regional offices and how these proposals would work in light of the need for United Nations coordination as reflected in General Assembly resolution 48/162 and the triennial review. Two delegations inquired whether the further decentralization of functions to the field would result in cost reductions and fewer posts in New York.

392. The Executive Director responded that strengthening the capacity of regional offices did not imply increases in budgets and numbers of staff, but would imply a streamlining of functions in New York. She reminded Board members that there would be no proposals for changing the overall structure of UNICEF, with its country offices, regional offices and headquarters, but rather that proposals would clarify the specific roles and accountabilities

for each location as part of the overall UNICEF system. The need for UNICEF to take better advantage of the expertise available throughout the organization, as well as from sister United Nations agencies, NGOs and other partners, and to learn from practical experience of country programmes was highlighted by the secretariat.

393. The establishment of management teams at country, regional and global levels as a new element of the UNICEF structure was supported by several delegations, as was the use of a mechanisms for staff participation in the development of policies and strategies. One delegation suggested that the management teams at all levels assume responsibility for ensuring broad participation. Questions were raised on standards for the teams and costs for travel, and it was suggested that the management teams make use of information technologies to reduce the need for frequent meetings and travel.

394. On relations with National Committees, many Board members supported closer relationships between UNICEF and National Committees. They felt, however, that it was essential to listen to the views of the National Committees, especially on the need to maintain their current independent NGO status. It was felt that their independence is essential to their advocacy and fund-raising roles, requiring a status for relations with their own Boards and civil society.

395. Many speakers stated their agreement with the response made by National Committees at their Annual Meeting. One delegation requested that the report of the Annual Meeting be distributed to Board members. Support was also expressed for the National Committee proposal that the Geneva office be charged with managing relations with National Committees.

396. One speaker stressed the need for National Committees to be more involved in strategic discussions on future directions of UNICEF. The development of key performance indicators and better definitions of audit content for independent audits was welcomed by several speakers, while another speaker expressed interest in the proposal regarding self-financing offices.

397. The Chairperson of the Standing Group of National Committees stated that consensus had been reached at the Yverdon meeting on the need for closer cooperation with UNICEF in terms of measurement of performance and the need to preserve the individual characteristics of National Committees to represent civil society. He expressed the need for preserving the identity and autonomy of National Committees under the leadership of their respective Executive Boards. He conveyed that National Committees welcomed closer collaboration with UNICEF regions, however, recommended that a focal point be created in Geneva to manage relationships between UNICEF and National Committees, with Pacific coast country National Committees still to propose the best set up for managing their relations. He congratulated the secretariat for the quality of work done in formulating recommendations on relations with National Committees and stated their confidence in this process.

398. A request was made for proposals on managing relations with National Committees to be discussed at the next inter-sessional meeting of the Board. The secretariat agreed to the proposal, indicating that Board members would be contacted to identify an appropriate date for the meeting.

399. On proposals related to the new human resources strategy, one delegation expressed support for a judicious mix of contract and permanent staff and requested that senior appointments reflect a mix of nationalities and gender. Another speaker expressed support for new approaches to address the problem of non-performance through separation. In her response, the Executive Director pointed out that quality of performance will form the basis of the new human

resources strategy, which will include assessment of performance of supervisors.

400. Regarding the external study on the UNICEF supply function, one speaker asked how new proposals would address the issue of outsourcing. The secretariat responded that UNICEF is taking outsourcing into consideration in the context of looking for the best costs possible.

401. The speaker for the NGO Committee on UNICEF stated that a mutually consultative process with NGOs was needed on programme development, implementation and evaluation, and that this should be standard practice in all country offices. A request was made for the secretariat to institutionalize the NGO consultative practice. The secretariat agreed that UNICEF needs to continue to enhance its relationships with NGOs at the country level.

402. One delegation requested information on the role of the Executive Board in the new structure. In the opening announcements, the secretariat had informed the Board of an informal meeting to take place 27 June on relations between the Board and the secretariat.

403. Regarding the report on management excellence to be presented to the third regular session in September, requests were made for policy decisions to be clearly outlined. One speaker suggested that the paper should include such items as the decisions proposed, the planned changes and their expected results, and the time-frame for implementation. Regarding the next inter-sessional meeting, the same speaker asked that information be provided to clearly illustrate the issues supporting the decisions that need to be taken and suggested the use of audio-visuals.

404. One speaker suggested that the matrix linking Booz•Allen & Hamilton recommendations to the MEP, as contained in document E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.3 presented at the first regular session in January, be included in the next progress report, with two additional columns demonstrating management excellence findings and actions.

405. In her response, the Executive Director stated that organizational structural issues would be discussed at the September session. Board members were reminded that the discussion would not involve proposals for radical changes, but rather would focus on the clarification of roles.

406. One delegation suggested that MEP had reached a level of maturity whereby the secretariat could begin to seek ways of measuring institutional gains. In responding, the Executive Director welcomed suggestions from Board members of indicators which bilateral agencies have found useful in their own reviews. One delegation suggested the possibility of requesting Booz•Allen & Hamilton to evaluate progress since its study. The secretariat suggested that any such involvement with firms in the future should be negotiated through a competitive bidding process. The Board was also reminded of ongoing consultations among the secretariat, the United Nations Efficiency Board and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on ways to move ahead with management excellence. One delegation added that it was too early to evaluate the impact of current reform efforts.

H. Harmonization of budget presentations

407. The Comptroller and Director of the Division of Financial Management made an oral progress report on the work being carried out by UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF on budget harmonization.

408. She said that in her report to the Executive Board at its second regular session in April, she had stated that a preliminary comparison of budgets identified differences between those of UNDP and UNFPA and that of UNICEF. Those differences concerned not only presentation, but also the scope and content of the budgets. It was possible that the different nature of each organization might affect the extent to which harmonization of all aspects of the budgets was desirable for the respective Executive Boards.

409. During the debates on this subject at the second regular sessions of both the UNDP/UNFPA and the UNICEF Executive Boards, one delegation had presented a comprehensive statement which was endorsed by other delegations. The statement set forth the basic purpose of harmonization and clearly identified the principles to be included in the harmonization efforts. Harmonization meant making the budgets more similar to promote understanding and support good decision-making. The similarities must go beyond content and presentation styles to encompass the underlying principles employed in the preparation of accounts and estimates. Similarity would not mean sameness.

410. The Comptroller expressed appreciation on behalf of UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA for the guidance provided by the Executive Boards, in terms of both the general framework set forth for the harmonization exercise and the clarity in identifying specific aspects of harmonization that were of concern to both Boards.

411. She said that as reported to the annual session of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board in May, the three organizations currently were addressing harmonization under five main headings:

(a) The key issue of scope and content, mainly because of earlier concerns of the applicability to UNFPA and UNDP of the integrated approach adopted by UNICEF for its headquarters and regional offices budget. This referred to the incorporation of programme activities in biennial budget estimates. An in-depth review of the global and interregional activities of the three organizations was being undertaken to determine the exact nature and comparability of the activities before the question of possible harmonization on the level of programme activities was addressed;

(b) An in-depth analysis to identify clearly what constitutes programme activities as opposed to activities in support of programmes. The latter group of activities would be further divided between those whose primary function is to support programmes and those whose primary function is general management and administration. The aim is to ensure that information can be compared across organizations;

(c) Common presentation styles, specifically the development of a common or fully comparable table reflecting resource utilization;

(d) Harmonization of key budgetary classifications, where the organizations currently are working on delineation and levels of aggregation for expenditure categories;

(e) Terminology for the identification of primary groupings of resources. Upon completion of the harmonization exercise, the organizations intend to submit the agreed terms with definitions to the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions for review and approval so that they can be incorporated in the Administrative Committee on Coordination glossary of financial terms.

412. The Comptroller stated that since the report to the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board, further progress had been made. The organizations had focused primarily and come to an agreement on the second and third areas - the development of a common resource plan and the related definitions or components to be included under each heading. It was intended that the resource plan would have three sections: (a) total resources available to the organization; (b) the use of resources, which would represent the backbone classified under three main headings (Programme activities, Programme support activities and Management and administration of the organization); and (c) a reconciliation between estimates included under the use of resources and the budget estimates.

413. An internal working paper summarizing discussions of the group and identifying the activities and units included under each proposed heading was made available to members of the UNDP/UNFPA and UNICEF Executive Boards at a joint informal briefing held on 12 June. This was the first time that a joint informal session was held by the two Executive Boards. The UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board had endorsed the UNICEF Executive Board decision 1996/16 (E/ICEF/1996/12 (Part II)), adopted at the second regular session, on the timing and nature of future reports on budget harmonization.

414. Delegations expressed appreciation for and satisfaction with the progress made on harmonization by the three agencies. Most speakers welcomed the innovative joint inter-sessional meeting and encouraged the secretariat to organize more informal sessions of this nature. Delegations stressed the need for continued dialogue and consultation in view of the technical nature of the subject. One speaker remarked on the progress made since the preparation of the resource table, complete with budget amounts, which had been distributed during the joint inter-sessional meeting. The speaker said that Board members should harmonize their requests to the agencies. The Boards should concentrate on using harmonization for strategic financial management and refrain from micromanagement.

415. One delegation was pleased that the Comptroller had discussed progress made rather than provide a catalogue of difficulties encountered. However, it was difficult to assess how much progress had been made without expert advice, which was not the fault of the agencies. Although the efforts towards harmonization have been delayed, they have gained momentum and it was expected that the 1998-1999 biennial budgets would be presented using the harmonized format. This was a very important political issue for the speaker's Government, specifically for the civil servants who dealt with multilateral aid. The results of harmonization would have an impact on the balance between his country's multilateral and bilateral aid.

416. One delegation encouraged the harmonization group to consider thoroughly the applicability of integrated budgeting to UNDP and UNFPA. Integrated budgeting as initiated by UNICEF should be the format to follow. Another delegation said that the harmonization of budget presentations was advantageous to recipient Governments because it would reduce duplication of efforts by agencies and maximize the use of resources at the country level. A delegation reiterated a request to have discussion papers on this subject made available in working languages.

417. The Comptroller expressed appreciation for the comments made. She reiterated the importance of a continued dialogue between Board members and the agencies so that the secretariats could respond to specific requirements expected by the Boards from the harmonization exercise. She requested the Executive Board to provide the secretariat with further guidance on specific information expected from the agencies as a result of harmonization. Some

speakers said that because of the technical nature of the subject, it would be helpful if the secretariat could prepare a list of its needs so that their missions could consult with experts from their capitals.

I. Draft report of the Secretary-General on enhancing internal oversight mechanisms in the operational funds and programmes

418. In introducing this agenda item, the President recalled that at the second regular Board session in April, delegations had an opportunity to discuss the "Draft report of the Secretary-General on enhancing internal oversight mechanisms in operational funds and programmes", and that their comments had been submitted to the Secretary-General. The Board decided to include this item on the agenda of the present session to provide delegations which were unable to comment at that time with another opportunity to do so. The secretariat was also requested to present an oral report on the current capacity of UNICEF for internal audit and oversight. The draft report was redistributed by the secretariat as document E/ICEF/1996/CRP.20.

419. Karin Sham Poo, Deputy Executive Director, presented the oral report. The purpose of the Office of Internal Audit (OIA) in UNICEF, she said, is to assist management in the effective performance of its responsibilities. Its primary role is to assist the Executive Director in her control of the organization by providing assurance that operations are well managed, or if weaknesses are identified, noting opportunities for improvement. OIA as an independent function in UNICEF, headed by a director, who reports directly to the Executive Director. The director is supported by 15 internal auditors, who are independent of the activities they audit. Internal audit staff are authorized to carry out all activities they deem necessary and have access to all areas of the organization. An office work plan is prepared and reviewed by the Internal Audit Committee and is also shared with the Board of External Auditors to facilitate collaboration and avoid duplication of work.

420. She described the scope of internal auditing, stating that the most common audit in UNICEF covers three types of audits - financial (of accounting records), operational (of organizational performance) and value-for-money (of operations, programmes and projects) - and is known as a comprehensive audit. The frequency and scope of audits is determined within a framework based on the experience and judgement of the director, with generally all major systems, functions and organizational units performing significant responsibilities examined within a period not exceeding three years.

421. The Deputy Executive Director said that the Director of OIA issues an audit report for each audit carried out, and all audit reports are shared with the Board of External Auditors. An annual summary of audit observations, highlighting significant findings, trends and reported findings which have not been satisfactorily corrected, is submitted to the Executive Director. The Deputy Executive Director explained further that the most immediate auditees are responsible for taking corrective action on audit observations; internal auditors follow up and determine that corrective action has been taken. The Executive Director has the ultimate responsibility for corrective actions not taken on reported findings.

422. In conclusion, she explained the role of the Internal Audit Committee, which is comprised of the Executive Director, the Deputy Executive Directors, the Directors of Programme Division, the Division of Human Resources and OIA, and the Comptroller. The Committee meets four times per year, or more frequently if required, to review and follow up on selected internal audit reports and to ensure that appropriate corrective action or preventive actions are taken.

423. One delegation expressed reservations about the presentation and the conditions under which the presentation was made, noting that the two-page text of the oral report was in English only and was very limited in scope. He was of the opinion that the presentation was very general in nature and did not adequately reflect the work done by OIA; thus, it was not conducive to the in-depth discussion he thought would take place on this issue. For example, problems encountered by OIA in its day-to-day work, which would have enabled Board members to gain a better appreciation of how the office works in concert with other UNICEF services, were not addressed. In addition, the speaker expressed concern that the presentation also did not address such matters as how the work of this office is integrated with other secretariat bodies, how the work is actually done and whether the audit reports are taken into account elsewhere. Issues regarding the recruitment process of auditors, their duties and their career advancement opportunities were also raised by this speaker, who added that clarification of the issues he raised would allow for better insight into the work of this office.

424. The same delegation said that as UNICEF would be providing input for the Secretary-General's report, the Executive Board should be kept fully apprised of the nature of the input in a summary fashion before it is submitted to the Secretary-General. He commented further about the need to make fuller use of the experience gained in auditing a variety of activities and for that information to be communicated to the Board in a summary presentation.

425. Another delegation supported those comments and requested the secretariat not to set a new precedent by submitting oral reports on issues as important as this one, issues that require an in-depth analysis on the part of Board members. She recalled that at the April Board session, her delegation had questioned the wisdom of the submitting comments of Board members on the Secretary-General's report before they had an opportunity to discuss the secretariat's views and where they felt auditing within UNICEF should properly be focused. In conclusion, she said that the oral report did not provide enough information to allow the Board to arrive at a decision.

426. The Executive Director said that, while she appreciated the concern expressed by the speakers, she considered that OIA was very important for UNICEF and she understood that the secretariat had been requested to describe the activities of office. She said that there would be a new Director of OIA, and she was looking to improve the quality of work of the office. This would allow UNICEF to identify some of the trends and some of the areas that have been strengthened, as well as those areas that need improvement. She looked forward to coming back to the Board on this matter in the future, but she requested delegations to allow time for the new director to begin to shape a new era. The secretariat would then be able to respond more specifically to some of the issues raised.

427. With respect to this being an oral report, the Executive Director recalled to delegations the General Assembly resolution that encouraged more issues to be presented on an oral basis. She added that this would allow the secretariat to provide the Board with the latest information.

428. The Executive Director said that she takes the role of OIA very seriously as it is a role that can be very important in assisting any head of an office in attempting to identify not only wrongdoing, if it exists, but also to prevent it from occurring. She said that she hoped the time would come when audit would not only identify issues, but work consistently with the secretariat to identify ways to resolve them. In conclusion, she stated that the secretariat had decided that, at least in the interim, the investigation capacity of UNICEF, where investigations were needed, would be better served by using the Office of Internal Oversight Services.

J. Update of the audit of the Kenya country office

429. The Executive Director made an oral report on the status of the audit follow-up. She said that she had recently gone to Kenya and met staff and donors. The programme had been on "hold", but there is now good progress. There was a mid-term review in May and an agreement to restructure the programme. She said that the progress report was given orally, but a follow-up audit is scheduled in September 1996, and a written report will be made available to the Board at its first regular session in January 1997.

430. Of the 67 audit recommendations, 36 were finalized and 31 were in various stages of progress. Thirty staff had been separated, 23 were summarily dismissed, 5 had resigned and 2 contracts not renewed. Files had been turned over to the local authorities for possible criminal prosecution. The situation with two suppliers who had been overpaid by $80,000 had been settled. The three remaining donor reports were completed and donors had been invited to attend the luncheon briefing.

431. A delegation asked to see a written report and have information on the additional checks and balances that had been put into place. The same delegation also asked if other offices had audit investigation reports and which ones and requested a copy of the NGO agreement. Another delegation said that the OIA report should be distributed to the delegations. The Executive Director commented that she would provide an executive summary with specificity. Regarding whether other audits had identified problems, she was unaware of any other reports that came even vaguely close to the level of the Kenya country office audit.

K. Reports on the meetings of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education and the UNICEF/World Health Organization Joint Committee on Health Policy

432. The Executive Board had before it the reports on the meeting of the UNESCO/UNICEF JCE, held at UNESCO Headquarters on 6 and 7 May (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.63), and on the meeting of the UNICEF/WHO JCHP, held at WHO Headquarters on 15 and 16 May (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.64). They were introduced by the President of the Board (see E/ICEF/1996/CRP.21 for the full text of his remarks).

433. Various delegations stressed the importance of UNESCO and UNICEF working together in the field of basic education, while at the same time calling for stronger and closer collaboration to avoid overlapping or uncoordinated actions. It was underscored that meetings of the joint committee are key to enhancing professional dialogue and continued improvement in the planning and implementation of joint education activities between both organizations.

434. Three specific issues contained in the JCE recommendations were highlighted: (a) the call for stronger school-community partnership and for increased awareness of civil societies of the need to shoulder their responsibility in handling basic education; (b) the thrust towards improved educational statistics and the availability of more reliable information in the education sector in general; and (c) the importance of ensuring a sound educational component within emergency situations, an often overlooked aspect in the handling of such situations. It was strongly recommended that UNESCO and UNICEF ensure that intensive consultation are held with countries for both the definition and implementation of these and other joint activities. The need to go beyond general issues and to specify the linkages between JCE and

education reform process at the country level was mentioned. (See the annex, decision 1996/23, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

435. Participants underscored the problem of the late arrival of the documentation which, they said, impeded a thorough study and analysis of both the JCE and the JCHP reports. Therefore, following the request of various delegations, it was agreed to revisit such reports at the third regular session in September.

436. Four delegations commented on the JCHP report, all stressing the importance of maintaining an effective relationship between UNICEF and WHO. One delegation stressed in particular the complementarity of the UNICEF and WHO missions, and recommended that relations between the two agencies at the technical level could be further strengthened with the establishment of the consolidated Health Section at UNICEF headquarters.

437. All delegations referred to the importance of the JCHP process, but two speakers questioned how the UNICEF Executive Board could best address the issues raised in the meetings of joint committees, and it was agreed that this topic would be discussed at the upcoming September Board session.

438. One delegation also raised the issue of the need for a more optimal United Nations response to coordinating health action, with the involvement of the World Bank and UNFPA as important partners with UNICEF and WHO. Another speaker expressed the view that the report was not sufficiently forward-looking, along the lines of the recently-approved UNICEF health strategy. One delegation highlighted the section on women's health and lessons learned as important features of the report. Two delegations expressed concern about the low level of progress on maternal and reproductive health. One of those delegations said that, in looking at the successes and failures of the past, there should be a sense of urgency about moving forward to reach the goals through continued collaborative efforts between UNICEF and WHO. The same delegation also emphasized the need to reach a practical MOU between UNICEF and WHO on emergencies in order to clarify roles and to enable each agency to reach its full potential in these situations.

439. The secretariat welcomed and noted the views of the Executive Board and reiterated that this first JCHP meeting for the new Executive Director had been extremely productive in consolidating a close relationship between the two agencies. It felt that a focus on both effective district health systems and a more integrated approach to the health of children and women were well in line with the new UNICEF health strategy. It confirmed its readiness to discuss at the next session the question raised as to how issues from joint committees should be addressed by the Executive Board. (See the annex, decision 1996/24, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

L. Report of the Working Group on Documentation

440. The "Interim report of the Working Group on Documentation" (E/ICEF/1996/17) was introduced by the delegate of France who represents the French linguistic group in the Western Group. He reported that the working group had expended considerable effort over the past few months dealing primarily with the length of documents, the time-frame for their submission to the United Nations Office of Conference and Support Services and the prerequisites for the electronic transfer of documents to delegations. The working group had agreed that the secretariats concerned (UNDP/UNFPA and UNICEF) should reduce document lengths to the page limits set by the General Assembly, i.e., 24 or 36 pages.

441. Speaking on behalf of his delegation, he suggested that the consideration of lengthy documents which would not be available in all languages within the six-week rule could be postponed to a later session of the Board. He called for documentation to be more precise, concise and analytical, pointing to the possibility of putting detailed statistics in addenda to the main document. While beyond the mandate of the working group, he stated that it would be useful for the Board to reorganize its work schedule to enable the secretariat to better prepare the documentation in a timely fashion. Finally, he suggested that the secretariat could assist countries lacking the resources to receive documents electronically by using its field office network to transmit documents to Board member capitals.

442. Another delegation was of the view that the Board should reduce the overall amount of documentation. The Board should systematically examine the documents requested and scheduled to assess whether all were necessary and which could be combined. He stated that this could be addressed by the working group on Board/secretariat relations. Regarding the simultaneous distribution in all languages, he saw no reason to wait for all language versions to be able to receive available copies. He pointed out that the electronic transfer of documentation does not require very costly investment.

443. One delegation commended UNICEF for an excellent record, while maintaining that there was still room for improvement. While fully aware of the importance of the simultaneous distribution of documents, none the less he underscored the need to retain some flexibility regarding the circulation of advance copies where unavoidable, and of the major documents as soon as possible in the three working languages.

444. A fourth delegation acknowledged the secretariat's efforts to expedite the simultaneous distribution of documents and reiterated her delegations' concern that even if electronic transmission to her capital were made possible through UNICEF, it would be useless if not in language versions.

445. The Secretary of the Board read out the decision on this agenda item recently adopted by the UNDP Executive Board which encouraged the working group to finalize its work and submit recommendations to the third regular session in September. (See the annex, decision 1996/25, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

M. Presentation of the 1996 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award

446. The President and the Executive Director made brief statements congratulating the *Centre régional pour le développement et la santé* (CREDESA) (Regional Centre for Health and Development) of Benin on its selection as winner of the 1996 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award. Professor Alinouhou accepted the award on behalf of CREDESA.

N. Other matters

Board members field visit

447. The report on the field visits of Executive Board members to Kazakstan and Kyrgyzstan from 20 April to 3 May 1996 (E/ICEF/1996/CRP.23) was introduced by the team leader and Vice-Chairman of the Board, who concentrated on the four major groups of problems: (a) the nature of UNICEF programme interventions in the two countries; (b) inter-agency coordination and

cooperation; (c) area-wide organization, structure, personnel and administration; and (d) budget issues.

448. He said that during the field trip, the team gained very useful insight into the work of UNICEF. The extensive and excellent programme put together by the UNICEF staff in the area office and sub-offices, with many project visits and dialogue with local authorities at all levels, gave the team a good opportunity to get a closer look at what is happening in these two countries. In that context, the mission team expressed its appreciation to all involved in the preparations of the field visits - officials at both government and local levels from the two countries visited and the UNICEF staff at headquarters and in the Central Asian Republics and Kazakstan (CARK) Area Office.

449. The speaker noted that after having two-year "bridging" programmes covering the period 1993-1994 for all five CARK countries, UNICEF developed and the Executive Board approved in 1995 full-pledged five-year country programmes for the area which reflected all the major needs of children in these countries.

450. In light of the above, the presence of UNICEF seems legitimate for the time being during the period of transition. Programmes meet Government priorities and, to a large extent, assistance goes to the most needy groups and regions. Central and local authorities seem to understand their situation very well and appreciate the work of UNICEF.

451. The 1995-1999 programmes for the CARK countries were shaped over the general UNICEF strategy mold of delivery of services, capacity-building, empowerment and advocacy, all implemented within the traditional social sectors of maternal and child health, nutrition, education, and water and sanitation, including an emphasis on the "decade goals". While the bridging programmes were to a large extent, made up of deliveries geared towards emergencies, far more emphasis is now rightly put on capacity-building, empowerment and advocacy.

452. The country programme recommendations (CPRs) for the five CARK countries were presented in 1995 under an area-wide strategy. Given that all five countries share the same political and economic past, including the same social system, and now have to face the same challenges of structural changes as described above, and given the relatively modest resources allocated by UNICEF, it seemed appropriate to build on these similarities in the programming. Although the countries have their own CPRs, the major problems and the programmes geared to these problems link the countries and make the use of funds more efficient: area-wide dissemination of plans for projects and activities; operational trials for projects beginning in one country; training and orientation; open communication between UNICEF offices and national organizations; and the Aral Sea project. The mission team found it easier to understand the argument regarding value added in this area approach and more convincing than the regional approach paper presented to the Board at its second regular session in April which, for good reasons, had to be kept on a very general level and, thus, was unable to be sensitive to local conditions. Possible future CPRs for the CARK countries may have to be more diversified as the specificities of the needs of the countries may develop in different directions.

453. The team noted that two countries have not yet produced country strategy notes. It was also mentioned that the mission team received differing impressions of United Nations coordination under the auspices of UNDP in the two countries.

454. In Kazakstan, regular formal coordination is still at an early stage. However, most agencies have recently moved to the same premises and, therefore, informal coordination is now possible. The UNICEF project office moved from the provisional office in hotel rooms to separate UNICEF facilities in 1994. To the extent that there are significant cost savings, moving to common premises should be considered.

455. In Kyrgyzstan, United Nations coordination under the leadership of the UNDP resident representative seems to be well established and functioning well. United Nations agencies and other donors meet frequently and regularly. Also in Kyrgyzstan, a new civil society is only now emerging. UNICEF plays an active role in support of this development. The country has a rich array of NGOs; as many as 250 organizations have sprung up over the last few years. Not all of them are NGOs in the customary sense of the word, however. Often, the social basis of an organization is unclear or totally absent. UNICEF provides assistance to the "Kyrgyz Children's Fund" which is involved in several advocacy activities for the Convention on the Rights of the Child. UNICEF also assists the organization in the implementation of the Social Policy Information Network, a database which provides information on local and international NGOs and their activities.

456. In Kazakstan UNICEF collaborates with a very powerful NGO, led by the First Lady, which is very efficient in fund-raising.

457. When the mission team arrived in Kazakstan, a certain scepticism existed regarding why the area office had been located outside the area and to what extent it was a rational set-up. The team made the following observations. When the operation was approved in 1993, a large emergency operation for Afghanistan was being run from Islamabad (the present area representative for CARK was at that time also representative to Afghanistan). The area office has a strong group of professionals led by an area representative with a strong programme background.

458. Actually Kazakstan has decided officially to move the capital to Akmola in the centre of the country. However, it is uncertain when it will be necessary for United Nations agencies to move there.

459. The nature and scope of UNICEF activities beyond 1999 in the CARK countries are uncertain. The present set-up in the countries endows the organization with flexibility in such a situation.

460. In spite of the initial scepticism, the team's observations regarding the location of the area office demonstrate that a thorough analysis of the pros and cons would have to be carried out before a decision could be made in the event a relocation of the area office is considered in the future. However, the team felt that the use of an area office model appeared to be a flexible and rational choice in the present situation, which is marked by change and uncertainty.

461. In that context, it was mentioned that area-wide activities should be considered as subregional activities to complement and support the work of the newly established regional office in Geneva.

462. The team stressed the importance of identifying budget-related issues at the country level that should be taken into account as work towards the integration of country offices into the budget and overall United Nations budget harmonization continues.

463. Finally, the speaker discussed issues of planning of Executive Board member field visits. Board members should have an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the work of UNICEF in countries where UNICEF has only recently begun operations. The team recommends that the planning phase of field trips begin well in advance of departure and that participants be involved at an early stage to help in developing the specific terms of reference for the visit. Meetings with the relevant desk officer at headquarters at an early stage could provide useful input into this planning process. It was also found important that the general terms of reference for field trips be used actively to provide guidance to both the team members and the relevant UNICEF offices as to the purpose and nature of the visit to ensure that legitimate expectations are met on both sides. As much relevant information as possible should be provided to the team members prior to departure, including updated organizational charts on UNICEF field offices. Likewise, through UNDP headquarters, information should be sought highlighting other United Nations and related activities in the countries to be visited.

464. The team visiting Kazakstan and Kyrgyzstan was unusually large, comprising 10 members. In spite of the success of the trip, it is recommended that in future, the size of the team should be reduced to 5-6 persons to avoid overburdening the field offices, especially as regards logistics. It is also believed that a smaller team will be able to work in a more informal way to the benefit of the team itself.

465. Briefings and debriefings by the field office constitute an essential input during the field visit and should also be given high priority in future. To facilitate the report writing of future mission teams, it may be considered useful to develop a prototype of the framework for the report and a check-list which could be discussed prior to departure and serve as a flexible tool of reference during the mission.

466. A member of the team supported the report of the team leader and noted that the present area set-up seemed to be very cost-efficient as it permits all five countries to share the knowledge and services of sectoral specialists, something they would be unable to do individually. It was also stressed that the area office plays an important role in the newly created region under the leadership of the regional office which will be responsible for strategic planning and programme development. The division of labour between the two offices needs to be developed. The delegation also expressed appreciation for the efficient organization of the trip by the CARK area office.

467. Another member of the team thanked UNICEF staff both in the field and at headquarters for their assistance in making the trip a success. He noted the high performance and professionalism of the UNICEF staff involved.

468. One delegation said that it was very important that the mission recognized the legitimacy of UNICEF work in these countries as presented in the trip report. He also noted the importance of emphasizing the role of the newly created regional office in supporting not only countries with regular UNICEF programmes, but also all other countries of the region.

469. In expressing appreciation for the report, a speaker from one of the countries that was visited mentioned that the recent visits by the UNICEF Executive Director and members of the Executive Board were very important as they helped them to learn more about the difficult situation of children and the country and the innovative programmes being developed. In this context, it was mentioned that the adoption of the regional approach and establishment of the regional office were important steps in meeting the needs of the

countries of the region. Another speaker discussed budgetary aspects of the visits.

United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa

470. The Deputy Executive Director, Stephen Lewis, made a special presentation on the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa. He informed delegations that UNICEF, along with some 20 other United Nations agencies, had participated in the meeting of the Steering Committee of the Special Initiative for Africa which was convened on 29 April in Nairobi. This was the first meeting following the official launch on 15 March, and participants were able to review the launch and the status of implementation, clarify several key issues that had arisen since the launch, identify the requirements of a political mobilization strategy, define the next steps for implementation and prepare a status report for the Administrative Committee on Coordination. It was agreed at the 29 and 30 April meeting of the Administrative Committee that the next steps in the process would concentrate on implementation planning, achieving speedy action and early results in several instances, retrofitting relevant existing efforts into the Special Initiative, involving Governments of African countries more actively, funding several efforts and identifying priority countries for implementation.

471. He mentioned that UNICEF is a participant in 7 of the 13 working groups established to oversee implementation which include water, food security, peace-building and conflict resolution, basic education, health, debt relief and partnership innovation, and that he and a representative from UNDP were responsible for overseeing the mobilization of political support. The respective roles of the working groups, their lead agencies and cooperating agencies have been clarified by the Steering Committee. Gender has been established as a cross-cutting issue requiring mainstreaming, and capacity-building has been recognized as an essential component in all sectors. While significant work has already been accomplished in several areas, he said, the working groups are actively pursuing the formulation of implementation strategies in close cooperation with African Governments to ensure that all the strategies reflect their priorities and ownership.

472. Meetings of both the Steering Committee and the Administrative Committee on Coordination have provided strong reaffirmation of United Nations system-wide support for the Special Initiative and a focus on arrangements for ensuring effective and expeditious implementation. The Administrative Committee will carry out its first review of progress in October 1996.

473. The UNICEF approach to the Special Initiative, he continued, recognizes the links to follow-up to the World Summit for Children and arrangements put in place for follow-up to international conferences. UNICEF will play a key role overall since three components - education, health and water - account for almost 90 per cent of the $25 billion in identified costs. Consequently, there will be a need to quantify financial requirements, facilitate resource reallocation and mobilization of additional external resources, and mobilize domestic resources.

474. The Deputy Executive Director acknowledged that the key to the success of the Special Initiative would be mobilizing the support of the entire international community, and to this end the Secretary-General was convening a meeting of donor Governments and donors on 2 July in Geneva so that donor Governments and institutions might discuss the scope and financial implications of the Special Initiative. The Executive Director will represent UNICEF at that meeting.

475. He reported on a meeting in Abidjan in April, which included representatives from UNICEF, the World Bank, WHO, UNESCO and Governments. They reviewed programmes and programming in the education and health sectors. He added that UNICEF country offices have initiated discussions with other United Nations agencies to develop modalities for the operationalization of the Special Initiative at the country level. In that connection, planning, implementation and monitoring mechanisms are being developed which will take place within the context of the sectoral investment programmes. The Special Initiative has also been a focal point of regional representatives' meetings which identified key actions to operationalize the Initiative. In conclusion, he said that UNICEF has been participating in regional and subregional meetings of United Nations agencies with Governments to define more precisely the modalities for detailed country-level follow-up.

476. Several Board members expressed concern that there had already been many initiatives for Africa and that the activities of the Special Initiative should have been incorporated into existing initiatives. Particular reference was made to the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa (NADAF), which was ready a very comprehensive development programme. It appeared that the Special Initiative was going to replace NADAF when, instead, it should be placed in the context of the total efforts of African Governments, and efforts to mobilize resources for basic social services under the 20/20 initiative. The results of the Oslo meeting on the 20/20 initiative should also be reflected in the Special Initiative.

477. In response, the Deputy Executive Director said that when the System-wide Special Initiative for Africa was launched, the Secretary-General indicated that the context was NADAF and that the Special Initiative was not meant to usurp the principles of NADAF nor the work that had been done with that successor United Nations programme for Africa. Although NADAF was constantly referred to, and although it was seen as a general context, the Special Initiative for Africa was, in fact, taking over as the priority focus. In a sense, NADAF was being referred to in an obligatory way, but the components of the Special Initiative are the components on which the African Governments and the agencies seem to be focusing. The Deputy Executive Director concurred with the remarks on the 20/20 initiative. There seemed to be general agreement that this was an important initiative, which had benefited greatly from the experience at the Norway conference.

478. One delegation was encouraged by reports that there was close coordination among the principal potential partners in terms of resources, areas of support and the mobilization of the target populations. In this way, the beneficiaries had a feeling of ownership of the programmes that most affected them. He suggested that the countries involved should be encouraged to continue to identify the areas of priority.

479. The Deputy Executive Director replied that in terms of Africa's ownership of the Special Initiative, it had been suggested by some African ministers and Governments that they wanted to claim a stronger ownership by virtue of being much more directly involved in all planning at the country level, which everyone agreed was appropriate. There are global discussions of this matter by the Administrative Committee on Coordination. He also indicated that there were regional discussions among the agencies and within agencies, as well as very careful country-by-country discussions to examine the areas of priorities and the modalities of implementation.

480. While one Board member commented that his Government has advocated greater resources for Africa, he had some difficulty in seeing how the Special Initiative would mobilize additional resources. Thus, he said, it must have

some other implications if it is to be successful, such as a better cost to benefits ratio. He said that perhaps there would be a more coherent strategy drawn up by multilateral and bilateral donors with recipient Governments and regional organizations so that the resources could be put to more effective use.

481. On the question of additional resources, the Deputy Executive Director replied that at the time of the launch, the President of the World Bank said that, at best, he could see 20 per cent additionality. It seemed generally to be accepted that this was more about the reallocation or redirection of existing monies, or monies which the Bank would mobilize from anticipated resources. It was hoped that the quality of the application of those resources would be improved because there would be more effective coordinated among United Nations agencies themselves and with the bilateral donors. He also pointed out that this was the first time that the United Nations family had ever joined in so concerted an effort around Africa in a coordinated sense. It was certainly the first time that international financial institutions were so closely integrated into an effort of the United Nations family.

Draft provisional agenda for the third regular session in September

482. The Secretary of the Executive Board reviewed the draft provisional agenda for the third regular session in September, which was based on decision 1995/38 (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1) and requests from Board members since the third regular session of 1995.

483. He drew attention to agenda item 3 on proposals for UNICEF cooperation and programme reviews, recalling that as decided at the first regular session in 1995 (decision 1995/8), Board approval of final CPRs would be on a "no objection" basis. Any Board member wishing to bring a particular country programme before the Board for discussion was required to inform the secretariat in writing before the meeting. The Bureau had agreed that 12 September would be the cut-off date for the submission of such requests. The Executive Director added that the date of 12 September was as close to the session as possible, but urged delegations to submit their requests earlier to enable the secretariat to prepare as complete a response as possible.

484. With regard to agenda item 12 on follow-up to decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council, he reminded delegations that the Council would still be in session beyond the deadline for the submission of documents to the United Nations for processing. Therefore, it was proposed that consideration of this agenda item be postponed to the first regular session in 1997. It was so decided.

485. The Secretary of the Board said that there would be an informal meeting on HIV/AIDS activities of UNICEF with the participation of UNAIDS and other partners. He also announced the dates of other meetings: 27 June on relations between the Board and the secretariat; and a pre-session briefing for the third regular session on 4 September. The date for the joint informal meeting on the harmonization of budget presentations would be announced later.

O. Concluding remarks by the Executive Director and the President of the Board

486. The Executive Director said that during the session, the Executive Board had covered a lot of ground during the substantive debates, and still managed to finish ahead of schedule. The Board had commemorated the fiftieth anniversary with a thought-provoking and entertaining programme (see

paragraphs 491-496 below), had recognized the achievements of an NGO partner in Africa in presenting the 1996 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award to CREDESA and had remembered the late James Grant, in dedicating the plaza outside UNICEF House in his name. The Board had also taken a number of decisions that would be critical for the future work of UNICEF. Especially important was the MTP, which would be a flexible framework for supporting UNICEF programmes. The wide-ranging exchange of views on the strategy for children in need of special protection measures would help to guide implementation of the strategy. The Convention on the Rights of the Child would guide those actions, as it was the best guarantee of child protection.

487. She spoke of the staff in country offices around the world who often work under difficult and even dangerous conditions, and the tradition of recognizing certain outstanding efforts at the annual session. In this connection, she announced that the 1996 Staff Award was presented to the Staff Association of the UNICEF Burundi office for its efforts to build and maintain a secure and positive work environment under the very difficult and complex circumstances in that country. The Executive Director said that the Staff Association had worked effectively and actively with management to ensure that staff security remained a major consideration in planning all activities. It had worked hard to maintain staff cohesion and morale, especially in times of acute crisis, by building team spirit and solid support structures to help staff cope with crises. It had helped to obtain very positive results in complex, stressful and difficult circumstances.

488. The Executive Director thanked several individuals for their contributions to the Board and the support they have provided her in the last year. Ms. Mitra Vasisht of India, who had been until recently a Vice-President of the Board, had left Government service to join UNFPA. In addition, Mr. Jan Top Christensen of Denmark, currently a Vice-President, was returning to Copenhagen to join the Danish Foreign Ministry. Mr. Lennarth Hjelmaker, who had served as Vice-President last year, had been appointed Sweden's Ambassador to Zimbabwe. She thanked them for their active participation in the Board and wished them well in their new positions. She also congratulated Mr. François Rémy, head of the French Committee for UNICEF, on his retirement, and expressed condolences to the Swiss delegation on the death of Dr. Hans Conzett, founder of the Swiss Committee for UNICEF.

489. Finally, she paid tribute to Mr. Kul Gautam, Director of the Programme Division, who was taking a year-long study and sabbatical leave. Mr. Gautam had held his current position since 1993, and for the last year, had served as Acting Deputy Executive Director for Programmes and led the Structure of Accountability project team. Following his study leave, he would return to UNICEF ready to meet new challenges.

490. The President said that the session had been marked by a number of significant events, including the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of UNICEF, the celebration of the Day of the African Child and the dedication of the James Grant Plaza outside UNICEF House. All were expressions of the appreciation and strong support UNICEF received from national and local Governments, NGOs and the public at large. The Board had adopted a number of important decisions, including those on the MTP, children in need of special protection measures and the conceptual framework for UNICEF emergency interventions. He hoped that all the decisions would further strengthen the capacity of UNICEF to respond to children's needs. The session also had demonstrated the spirit of dialogue and close cooperation between the secretariat and the Executive Board, as exemplified by the debate on MEP. He said that in awarding the 1996 Staff Award to the UNICEF team in Burundi, the Executive Director had reminded the Board of the hard work and dedication of UNICEF staff around the world.

III. COMMEMORATION OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF UNICEF

491. A commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of UNICEF was held in the Trusteeship Council Chamber on Wednesday, 19 June. All members of the Executive Board and observer delegations, representatives of National Committees and NGOs, and senior United Nations officials were invited to attend.

492. In his welcoming remarks, the President of the Executive Board said that the large number of guests, representing many different parts of the UNICEF family, including Governments of developing and industrialized countries, other United Nations agencies, National Committees, NGOs, Goodwill Ambassadors and UNICEF staff, was an indication of how important UNICEF had become to the international community during the last 50 years. The public at large also had been a very valuable alley of UNICEF, offering strong support over the years. Of course, he noted, the most important of all were the tens of thousands of children and women who had benefited from the assistance provided by UNICEF, beginning with children from his own region - Eastern Europe - who had received food and clothing in the aftermath of the Second World War.

493. Today, the mission and scope of UNICEF work had broadened to include not only survival, but also the protection and development of children. Steady progress was being made towards meeting the goals set by the World Summit for Children, and the international community had demonstrated its commitment to children through the near universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. But despite that good work and the best of intentions, too many children in both industrialized and developing countries were threatened by malnutrition, disease, illiteracy, exploitation and drug abuse. He asked that as delegations commemorated the founding of UNICEF, they not forget that as members of the UNICEF family, they had a special responsibility towards those children.

494. The Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, Mr. Nitin Desai, read a message from the Secretary-General congratulating UNICEF, its Executive Board and National Committees, as well as other members of the UNICEF family for their tireless efforts over the years on behalf of children and women. On 30 September, the Secretary-General would present to the General Assembly a report detailing progress that has been made towards achievement of the goals of the World Summit for Children. Preliminary data suggested that major progress had been made in most countries in every region, although challenges still remained. He was particularly gratified to see that UNICEF had used its anniversary year to take stock and prepare for those challenges. In conclusion, he stated: "No cause is greater than the cause of children. They represent our future and deserve our unwavering commitment. UNICEF embodies that cause and that commitment. On behalf of the entire United Nations system, I offer you heartfelt congratulations on your fiftieth anniversary."

495. Ms. Margaret Catley-Carlson, President of the Population Council, and Mr. Olara Otunna, President of the International Peace Academy, addressed the gathering, preceded by brief introductions by the Executive Director.

496. There was a performance by the Yamaha Junior Original concert. Six children, between the ages of 9 and 17 years, performed their own original compositions on various instruments. The standing ovation plus the bravos echoing from the Trusteeship Council were testimony to the excellence of the children's musical ability. The programme also included an audio-visual presentation that highlighted the work of UNICEF over the last 50 years, and concluded with a reception.

Part four

THIRD REGULAR SESSION OF 1996

Held at United Nations Headquarters from 16 to 19 September 1996

I. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

A. Statements by the President of the Executive Board and the Executive Director

497. In his opening remarks, the President described his recent visit to the UNICEF programmes in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Cambodia. During the visit, which he made in his capacity as President of the Executive Board, he was accompanied by the Regional Director and the Deputy Regional Director for East Asia and the Pacific. He was able to visit a number of projects and to meet with ministers and government representatives in both countries, as well as with the staff of the UNICEF offices in Vientiane and Phnom Penh. He said that UNICEF had a strong and active presence in the region and worked in close cooperation with national Governments, other United Nations agencies and national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to implement policies and programmes for the protection of mothers and children.

498. At the current session, he said, one of the most important issues before the Board was the approval of 48 country programme recommendations (CPRs). The exercise of discussing country notes in January, followed by full CPRs at the present session, had been extremely valuable. Through this process, the Executive Board had been able to comment on the choice and mix of strategies used in the various country programmes. The Board was aware, of course, that country programmes were the result of detailed negotiations and consultations between UNICEF and the Governments concerned, as well as with donors, United Nations agencies, NGOs and other partners. Delegations could see the result of that hard work in the recommendations, and the fact that they were to be approved on a "no objection" basis was an indication of the Board's appreciation of the complexities of the process. By providing comments on the country notes, however, the Executive Board had been able to have an important input into the process.

499. The Executive Director reported briefly on several important events that had taken place during the summer. These included the World Congress Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (see paragraphs 605-608 below) and the Children's Mini-Summit on the Anti-war Agenda, which was held in Yaounde, Cameroon, in July, in conjunction with the Organization of African Unity Summit. The mini-summit was organized in part to draw attention to the increasing number of children who were experiencing violence and were affected by war and conflict on a daily basis.

500. The issue of children and war would also be on the agenda of the fifty-first session of the General Assembly, when it would review the Secretary-General's study on the impact of armed conflict of children, prepared by Mrs. Graça Machel (see paras. 602-604 below). UNICEF hoped that the Assembly's debate and action on its recommendations would help to focus the world's attention on the plight of children in war and help Governments to find concrete measures for protecting and rehabilitating them. This would involve not only political will on the part of all parties to conflicts, but also increased resources for education, family reunification and physical and psycho-social rehabilitation. In addition to global advocacy on issues such as land-mines and resource mobilization, UNICEF would continue to focus on its programmes of cooperation in affected countries to implement the Assembly's recommendations on the study.

501. Also on the agenda of the General Assembly was the Secretary-General's report on progress at mid-decade towards the goals set at the World Summit for Children. There would be a special ceremony on 30 September, the sixth anniversary of the World Summit, during which the Secretary-General would review the findings of the report, which showed that there had been major improvements in most countries and regions around the world, with concrete

benefits to millions of children as a result. It also showed that goals, when set in conjunction with national realities and priorities, were a valuable tool for targeting human and financial resources to improve children's lives and well-being. The report indicated the areas where more work needed to be done by the end of the decade, especially reducing maternal mortality and malnutrition. UNICEF would use the country programming process to work with Governments and other United Nations and NGO partners to focus on those areas. (See E/ICEF/1996/CRP.31 for the full text of her remarks.)

B. Adoption of the agenda

502. The agenda of the session, as contained in document E/ICEF/1996/18 and Corr.1, included the following items:

Item 1: Opening of the session: statements by the President of the Executive Board and the Executive Director

Item 2: Adoption of the provisional agenda and timetable and organization of work

Item 3: Proposals for UNICEF cooperation and programme reviews: final CPRs for implementation in 1997

Item 4: Oral report on the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa

Item 5: International Child Development Centre (ICDC)

Item 6: Outline of the report on the implementation of the health strategy for UNICEF

Item 7: Report on the Management Excellence Programme (MEP)

Item 8: Oral progress report on the audit of the Kenya country office

Item 9: Oral report on the harmonization of budget presentations

Item 10: Oral status report on Greeting Card and related Operations (GCO)

Item 11: Discussion on the allocation of general resources

Item 13: Working Group on Documentation

Item 14: Programme of work for 1997

Item 15: Other matters

Item 16: Concluding remarks by the Executive Director and the President of the Executive Board.

503. It was agreed that item 12, financial matters, would be deferred to the first regular session of 1997.

504. In accordance with rule 50.2 and the annex of the Rules of Procedure, the Assistant Secretary of the Executive Board announced the observer delegations that had submitted credentials for the session and had advised the secretariat of the agenda items in which they had a special interest. They were (with the agenda items indicated, if any, shown in parentheses): Albania; Algeria (all); Argentina (all); Armenia (7,11,12); Australia; Austria (7); Bangladesh (all); Barbados (11); Belarus; Belgium; Benin (all); Bosnia and Herzegovina; Botswana; Costa Rica; Czech Republic; El Salvador; Ethiopia;

Finland; Germany (all); Guatemala; Guinea; Holy See (all); Hungary; Ireland (all); Israel; Kazakstan; Lesotho; Liberia; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Malta (all); Mexico (all); Mongolia (3); Nepal (all); New Zealand (all); Nicaragua (3,11); Nigeria (all); Oman; Panama; Philippines; Poland (all); Republic of Moldova; Rwanda; Senegal (3); Slovakia; Slovenia; South Africa; Spain; Sudan; United Republic of Tanzania (3); Uruguay; Yemen; and Zimbabwe.

505. In addition, Palestine (3) had submitted credentials, as had l'Agence de Cooperation Culturelle et Technique (Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation) (1,4,5,13,14); Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (4,6); United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); World Health Organization (WHO); the Standing Group of National Committees for UNICEF (7); Anglican Consultative Council (3,4,5,6,7,8); International Association of Lions Clubs; International Catholic Child Bureau (1,7); International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (5); International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies; International Federation of Settlements and Neighbourhood Centres.

II. DELIBERATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

A. Proposals for UNICEF cooperation and programme reviews: final country programme recommendations implementation in 1997

506. The Executive Board had before it a total of 48 CPRs. The President reminded the Executive Board that the CPRs were divided into two groups. Forty CPRs were presented as addenda to the country notes discussed by the Board at its first regular session of 1996. In accordance with decision 1995/8 (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1), those recommendations were to be approved on a "no objection" basis. Delegations had been advised that if they wanted to comment on any of the CPRs, they should have notified the secretariat in writing by 12 September. Only one member had done so. In accordance with rule 50.1 of the Rules of Procedure, any delegation had the right to participate in the discussion when its own country programme was under consideration.

507. The remaining eight CPRs were mainly "bridging" recommendations for short-duration country programmes or "stand-alone" supplementary funding recommendations. As proposed at the September Bureau meeting, those CPRs would be introduced by the respective regional directors. Delegations had not been required to provide prior notice about addressing them, except for observers wishing to address CPRs other than those of their own country. The Board would approve them individually, in keeping with past practice.

Africa

508. The country programmes for the Comoros, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Sao Tome and Principe, South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.1/Add.1-E/ICEF/1996/P/L.8/Add.1) were approved by the Executive Board without objection. The Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa introduced short-duration programmes for Angola and Somalia (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.65 and E/ICEF/1996/P/L.66).

509. A delegation said that the difficult socio-economic situation in Angola was negatively affecting children and women in that country. Increasingly, donors were channelling resources through NGOs from their countries, creating a form of dependency, while the Government was often blamed for not dealing with the socio-economic crisis. The speaker urged UNICEF to consider increasing its general resources allocation to Angola and invited the Executive Director to visit the country in order to see the problems for herself. Another speaker raised questions about the numbers and cost of UNICEF staff in the country, stating that it was necessary to limit staff costs in accordance with current management policies and stringent budgetary measures. Another delegation sought clarification on the linkage between the requested level of supplementary funds for the programme and the UNICEF portion of the consolidated appeal for Angola. The Regional Director replied that these were the same.

510. With regard to the Somalia country programme, a delegation stressed the need for more precise information on actual geographic areas of focus, the ratio between emergency and regular actions, and the staffing situation so as to better ascertain implementation status and operational costs of the programme. The Regional Director agreed and said that the required information was available in the tables in the annex to the CPR.

511. A delegation praised the Burundi country programme for its suitability and thanked UNICEF for its assistance to children in that country. The speaker, however, expressed concern about the impact of the OAU economic sanctions on Burundi's children, which he said had resulted in the suffering of women and children. The speaker said that on 13 September 1996, the

Burundi National Assembly had been re-established and all political parties unbanned. He urged that efforts be made to lift the sanctions so that basic services could be improved. Mr. Stephen Lewis, Deputy Executive Director, said that it was not for UNICEF to pass judgement on the decision taken by OAU member States. However, in accordance with its anti-war agenda and its concern about the impact of the sanctions on children in Burundi, UNICEF, together with other United Nations agencies, recently had made contacts with the Regional Sanctions Committee to request exceptions for humanitarian assistance, which had been granted. UNICEF was in the process of obtaining the appropriate clearances and hoped to monitor closely the utilization of the relief supplies and equipment for which exemptions had been granted.

512. The country programmes for the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Guinea, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.9/Add.1-E/ICEF/1996/P/L.15/Add.1) were approved by the Executive Board without objection. The Regional Director for West and Central Africa introduced short-duration "bridging" programmes for the Congo, the Gambia and Liberia (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.67-E/ICEF/1996/P/L.69).

513. A number of speakers spoke about the CPR for Liberia. A delegation said that the situation in the country was improving. Another speaker thanked UNICEF for its commitment to children in the war-ravaged country and expressed the hope that the two-year bridging programme would be replaced, in due course, with a normal country programme when peace returned. Other speakers raised questions about the UNICEF perception of the situation in Liberia and the organization's capacity for implementation, as most UNICEF staff had been evacuated because of the war. The same delegations said that the Liberia CPR could have been shorter and more realistic.

514. The Regional Director said that UNICEF was working towards expanding access outside Monrovia, negotiating the reintegration of child soldiers and providing emergency basic services in water supply, health and education in areas to which it had access. UNICEF was undertaking advocacy for the protection of the rights of children and women and seizing the opportunity to re-establish basic services where possible. The two-year bridging programme would be a basis for stronger activities in the future. There were eight international staff members in the country supported by several national staff. UNICEF was monitoring events on a daily basis so that more staff could be deployed as the situation improved.

515. Another speaker expressed support for the Nigeria country programme, but said there were constraints that could affect implementation, particularly the political factors in selecting priority local government areas, as well as the importance of targeting the most disadvantaged children. The speaker stressed the need for stronger collaboration with the Government and other partners in the efforts to eradicate dracunculiasis (guinea worm disease). The Regional Director said that programming decisions were taken in close consultation with authorities at the country level and that UNICEF was working with WHO and other partners towards the eradication of the disease.

The Americas and the Caribbean

516. The country programmes for Argentina, Belize, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panama and Uruguay (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.16/Add.1-E/ICEF/1996/P/L.27/Add.1) were approved by the Executive Board without objection. The Regional Director introduced "stand-alone" supplementary funding recommendations for subregional programmes for nutrition and water and sanitation in Central America and Panama and for a subregional programme for the Amazon (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.70).

517. A delegation asked if there already was some indication of donor interest in funding the subregional programmes. The speaker asked why one of the subregional programmes for Central America had country-specific budgetary

allocations while another only had a subregional budget and why the Central American proposals included staffing requirements while the Amazon subregional proposal did not. The decision to include all three subregional recommendations in one document was also questioned, given that the Central American subregion and the Amazon subregion were quite different. Another delegation expressed satisfaction with the cooperation between UNICEF and the Federación de Municipalidades del Istmo Centroamericano (Federation of Central American Municipalities) in the subregional water programme. The speaker indicated his Government's satisfaction with the work of UNICEF in Central America.

518. The Regional Director explained that the Central America micronutrient programme required a separate budget for each country because the interventions were of different nature in each country. She highlighted the donors that had expressed interest in continued funding of the programmes. There were no additional staffing requirements for the Amazon subregional programme as it received technical and operational support from the regional office and staff were already in place in the countries covered by the programme. The Executive Director said that three programmes had been presented in one document to save resources and in keeping with past practice.

519. One speaker, referring to the Nicaragua CPR, indicated her Government's full commitment and support for the programme and stressed the importance of continued support from the donor community.

Asia

520. The country programmes for Malaysia, Mongolia and the Pacific Island countries (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.28/Add.1-E/ICEF/1996/P/L.30/Add.1) were approved by the Executive Board without objection.

521. Two delegations commented on the country programme for Mongolia. One speaker said that Mongolia deserved substantial UNICEF assistance in view of the particular social problems caused by the process of transition to a market economy. The representative of Mongolia emphasized his Government's commitment to protect the vulnerable segments of the population, particularly women and children, and thanked UNICEF for its assistance.

522. The Regional Director introduced a recommendation for a short-duration country programme for the Lao People's Democratic Republic (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.71). One delegation said that implementation of the maternal and child health (MCH) programme, particularly those components financed by one bilateral donor, appeared to be very slow. The speaker expressed reservations about the technical capacity of UNICEF staff to implement such a project and observed that the logical framework was not used in preparing the programme and thus the work plan was unclear. She said that there was a lack of coordination between the two components of the water and sanitation programme and a lack of attention to capacity-building. The Regional Director, citing the expanded programme on immunization as an example, said that in the experience of UNICEF, all projects in this country started slowly. This was due to limited infrastructure and technical capacity, especially at provincial and district levels. Each zone, defined in relation to the population's proximity to service delivery centres, required its own strategy, which had to be developed with local partners. Consequently, it had been found appropriate to develop capacity and systems around implementation of one intervention and later use these for other objectives. MCH was particularly challenging, but it would receive increased attention from UNICEF in the context of all parties working together to build capacity in Government.

523. The country programmes for Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.31/Add.1-E/ICEF/1996/P/L.33/Add.1) were approved by the Executive Board without objection.

Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States

524. The country programmes for the Republic of Moldova and Turkey (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.34/Add.1 and Corr.1 and E/ICEF/1996/P/L.35/Add.1) were approved by the Executive Board without objection.

525. The delegation of Turkey expressed appreciation for the continued support of UNICEF. The speaker said that Turkey's indicators related to gross national product (GNP) and the welfare of children had improved dramatically in recent years and were, in fact, better than the 1994 figures cited in the CPR. As a result, UNICEF was significantly reducing its overall resource allocations to Turkey from a combined total of over $11,576,000 in general resources (plus $8,023,000 in supplementary funds) to only $4.9 million in general resources plus whatever supplementary funds could be raised. Turkey endorsed the decrease and even looked forward to becoming a net donor to UNICEF in the future. Turkey would consider in future years whether or not to submit further country programmes for funding or whether to rely solely on national resources mobilized through national institutions.

Middle East and North Africa

526. The country programmes for Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, the Sudan and Tunisia (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.36/Add.1-E/ICEF/1996/P/L.40/Add.1) were approved by the Executive Board without objection. The Regional Director introduced a recommendation for a short-duration country programme for Iraq (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.72).

527. One speaker referred to Iraq's high infant and child mortality rates and described the country's current situation as "heart-breaking". He said that since 1993, his country had provided bilateral assistance to Iraq worth $37.5 million in the form of drugs, medical supplies and foodstuffs. His country would continue its assistance and support UNICEF action despite the modesty of means compared to the size of the tragedy in Iraq. Another delegation expressed support for the programme and emphasized the importance of UNICEF interventions in the areas of water supply, nutrition, health and sanitation to help ease the suffering of Iraqi children in the aftermath of the Gulf War. A third delegation expressed support for the country programme and asked about water supply and sanitation in the southern part of the country, which had suffered from destruction during the Gulf War. The Regional Director stated that UNICEF, in collaboration with WHO, supported the water supply and sanitation programmes in northern and southern Iraq. However, water systems in the south were in dire need of spare parts, water purification chemicals and expertise. In 1995, the UNICEF contribution to the programme had helped to provide clean water to nearly 2 million Iraqis.

528. See the annex, decision 1996/29, for the recommendations approved by the Executive Board.

B. Oral report on the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa

529. The oral report on the United Nations System-wide Initiative on Africa was presented by Mr. Stephen Lewis, Deputy Executive Director. He said that UNICEF had participated in a donor consultation on the Initiative organized by the Secretary-General in Geneva on 2 July; a panel discussion held soon afterwards during the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council in New York on 10 July; and an inter-agency meeting held in Brazzaville, Congo, on 16-17 July at which the health care reform objectives for Africa were agreed upon. He also announced that the next meeting of the Administrative Committee on Coordination was scheduled for 20 September.

530. On the scope and content of the Initiative, he said that there was complementarity between the Initiative and the United Nations New Agenda for Development in Africa (UN-NADAF), which was undergoing a mid-term review by the General Assembly. The Initiative was meant to provide the impetus for the practical implementation at country level of specific objectives and priority areas of UN-NADAF in selected key sectors such as health, education and water. Poverty in Africa was continuing to rise and sustainable development would require more investment in children, lower levels of indebtedness and less inequality. UNICEF was taking the lead in helping Governments to prepare their health reform programmes along the lines of the Bamako Initiative and other sectoral investment programmes to enable practical implementation of the Initiative.

531. Progress was being made by the United Nations system to develop and implement sectoral programmes in Botswana, Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Uganda and Zambia. UNICEF also was supporting a special study of the water and sanitation sector in Africa through the All Africa Professional Working Group in support of household water security. A multidisciplinary task force has been established at New York headquarters to support country offices in implementing the Initiative.

532. Regarding resources for the Initiative, he referred to the contributions of $22.6 million and $10.7 million from the Governments of Norway and Canada, respectively, in support of girls' education in 21 African countries. Collaboration with the World Bank and UNESCO was ongoing to identify the first five countries for education sector investment programmes.

533. Delegations welcomed the practical manner in which UNICEF is approaching the Initiative. Some delegations suggested that the strong commitment and experience of UNICEF should be reflected in the allocation of its general resources and programmes, especially in the areas of health and education. They urged UNICEF to reinforce collaboration with other United Nations agencies and with the Bretton Woods institutions with a view to defining a common implementation framework for the Initiative. Other delegations expressed appreciation for the focus on 5 programme areas out of the 20 covered by the Initiative and called on UNICEF to use its vast experience in social sector programming to show concrete examples of successful programmes, for example, through the Bamako Initiative.

534. One delegation said that the element of evaluation was missing from the presentation and wanted to know how cooperation with other United Nations agencies was evolving. Another delegation said that the priorities of the Initiative were broadly stated and, therefore, should be implemented to make a difference. One speaker said that the Initiative could make a contribution to sustainable development in Africa and recommended that efforts be made to ensure Africa's ownership. In this connection, one delegation stated that most African countries were not clear on the scope and content of the Initiative and asked whether or not new resources would be provided. Another speaker indicated that sectoral investment strategies were crucial to the development process in Africa and suggested that they should be used to build upon Governments' own initiatives.

535. One delegation called for the redistribution of available resources and cautioned against creating expectations of new resources. The same speaker called for more effective coordination among participating agencies. Another speaker wanted to know how the inter-agency meeting on health in Brazzaville was connected to the World Bank's health assistance programme for Africa and whether it was a joint effort between the World Bank, WHO, UNICEF and bilateral agencies, as was the case in Zambia, and whether the same type of collaboration was envisaged for Mozambique.

536. Responding to the comment on evaluations, the Deputy Executive Director agreed that his oral report was not meant as an evaluation of the progress of

the Initiative to date. He clarified that appropriate mechanisms would be put in place to monitor and report on the Initiative as it progressed. Regarding financing, he said that except for an estimated 20 per cent of the $25 billion in new money for the 10-year time-frame, the Initiative was never meant to release additional amounts of money. Regarding the World Bank, he stated that while he was sure of the Bank's commitment to the Initiative, he was not sure of the level of additional financing from the Bank. He noted, however, that the World Bank currently provided $3.5 billion annually to the social sectors of developing countries, Africa included, and planned to provide approximately $5 billion annually in the near future. He also pointed out that Mozambique received coordinated support from donors.

C. International Child Development Centre

537. The Executive Board had before it a progress report and proposal for ICDC activities for 1997-1999 (E/ICEF/1996/20). The report was introduced by the Deputy Executive Director, Mr. Stephen Lewis. Many delegations expressed satisfaction with the report, the progress of activities to date and the planned activities for 1997-1999.

538. One speaker said that the report was not clear as to the connection between ICDC and the MEP. Also, because the Centre's activities were based on a global framework, the document should have referred to the Programme Division and the Division of Communications. The report mentioned links with NGOs and National Committees for UNICEF in paragraph 33 but not links with UNICEF divisions. The Director of ICDC agreed that there should be improved coordination between ICDC and the rest of UNICEF. ICDC was now an integral part of the newly revitalized Programme Group, together with the Programme Division; the Office of Evaluation, Policy and Planning; and the Office of Emergency Programmes. The members of the group would be in regular and substantive contact with each other and with field offices in order to learn from country programme experiences. The Deputy Executive Director added that interaction between ICDC and the Division of Communication would be addressed in the communication strategy to be presented to the Executive Board in 1997.

539. Another speaker noted the cooperation between the Centre and the Committee on the Rights of the Child and suggested that this cooperation should continue. Several speakers suggested that the Centre should take a lead role in disseminating information on the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

540. Numerous speakers praised the Government of Italy for its ongoing support of the Centre, as well as the Government of Sweden, the Italian Committee for UNICEF and the World Bank for their financial support for specific projects. Speakers invited others to join the present donors in exploring and financing the full potential of the Centre. One delegation said that the report did not address the Centre's financial situation and that more advocacy was required by UNICEF to meet the Centre's financial needs.

541. A speaker said that while the proposals and lines of action for the years ahead should be supported, after eight years the Centre still did not have a clear identity. It was unclear whether it was a clearing-house or a research think-tank. The paper made a good start in addressing the identity issue, but should address how ICDC could be orientated more towards the mission of UNICEF and become a knowledge base for capacity-building. The Director replied that training would be a major component of the Centre's work and that it would not take place in the traditional mode but be problem-oriented and more reflective of state-of-the-art programming.

542. Several speakers suggested that the issue of child sexual exploitation should be incorporated into the Centre's major areas of research. A delegation suggested that "technogetic" catastrophes be another area of

concentration, not only in terms of medical and social assistance but also psychological assistance. One speaker asked about the criteria for selection of topics for concentration. Another speaker said that research should not be confined to researchers or institutions in industrialized countries, but should also include those from developing countries.

543. A number of speakers said that the Centre's work should be better disseminated. The Director said that the Centre would be using modern electronic methods to facilitate and expand the exchange of programme information and its timely dissemination. Greater dissemination via modern communication channels would be undertaken, as well as the production of more "reader-friendly" versions of research. Many delegations said that the Centre should draw more upon information from UNICEF field experiences and translate that information into useful research products. Several speakers suggested that the Centre should become the institutional memory of UNICEF. A delegation said that the Centre's work should be published in the six official languages of the United Nations.

544. In response to a query on cooperation with other international institutions, the Director said that he had made several such contacts and agreed that they should be developed further. He agreed that the Centre must be at the forefront of addressing such issues as child sexual exploitation and child abuse. In reply to a statement about the Centre's identity, he said that one of its aspects was to serve as a place where there is the freedom to reflect and analyse UNICEF programming experiences. (See the annex, decision 1996/30, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

D. Outline of the report on the implementation of the health strategy for UNICEF

545. The Chief of the UNICEF Health Section introduced the outline of the report on the implementation of the UNICEF health strategy (E/ICEF/1996/19). He emphasized that a detailed report on implementation of the strategy would be submitted to the Executive Board in its first regular session of 1997.

546. Many delegations expressed satisfaction with both the outline and the presentation. They expressed support for the guiding principles of the new health strategy: (a) equity of access to quality health services; (b) better integration of specific strategies in health promotion, essential health services and health monitoring; (c) focus on national capacity-building; (d) development of partnerships; and (e) country specificity. Speakers also welcomed the emerging priorities for UNICEF, i.e., women's and youth health and HIV/AIDS. Some delegations stressed that women's health should be considered in its broad sense and not be restricted to reproductive health. Delegations encouraged UNICEF to provide continuous support to the monitoring of the goals of the World Summit for Children as well as to the implementation of the recommendations of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women, by mobilizing financial and human resources.

547. While supporting the new emphasis on a better integration of specific health strategies with a more precise multisectoral approach to health, some delegations said that this should be within the context of the World Summit goals. In addition, continued UNICEF support to community participation approaches, in particular to the Bamako Initiative, was considered very important. Delegations agreed that UNICEF would need to broaden the capacity of both its staff and of health and non-health partners beyond health issues *stricto sensu* in order for them to take up the challenges of the new health strategy. All delegations supported the UNICEF aim to develop effective partnerships, saying that these should include bilateral development agencies, such institutions as the International Vaccine Institute in Seoul, Republic of Korea, international professional associations and universities. The

secretariat emphasized that UNICEF was already a very active partner in the process of renewing the "health for all" concept.

548. Many delegations underlined the need for clarification of the respective roles of headquarters, country and regional offices in the light of the new strategy and the management excellence reforms, saying that the overall role of UNICEF in health was as a catalyst for broad action in the context of the strategy. All delegations welcomed the emphasis on country programming and the need for the plan to be adapted to country-specific situations and national health policies. Several speakers, however, expressed some concerns about the development of country typologies and stressed the need for better appraisal of lessons learned and experience exchanges between countries. The secretariat was asked to elaborate further on the various mechanisms to be set up in order to implement and monitor the health strategy, and delegations said that these should be the result of broad consultation both inside and outside UNICEF.

549. The Deputy Executive Director of UNFPA also addressed the Executive Board under this agenda item. He said that in a recent decision (96/38), the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board had requested its President to ascertain the views of the WHO and UNICEF Executive Boards on the possible membership of the UNDP/UNFPA Board in the UNICEF/WHO Joint Committee on Health Policy (JCHP). The decision also requested that appropriate action be taken to allow the UNFPA secretariat to participate in the January 1997 JCHP meeting as an observer. After a brief discussion, during which the Executive Director stated that the next JCHP meeting would not take place in January 1997, but later in the year, the Board agreed to discuss the issue at its first regular session of 1997. (See the annex, decision 1996/31, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

E. Report on the Management Excellence Programme

550. The Executive Board had before it a progress report on the MEP (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.13), which was introduced by the Executive Director. The report focused specifically on recommendations on the roles of country, regional and headquarters offices and on responsibility for managing relations with National Committees for UNICEF. The Executive Director said that headquarters would continue to provide decisive leadership, while relinquishing some functions that could be carried out more efficiently by regional and country offices. New York headquarters would focus on areas that were appropriately the role of headquarters, while regional management teams (RMTs), led by regional directors, would take on clearly defined responsibilities for oversight of performance of regional and country offices. The RMT would share responsibility for the quality of UNICEF work in each region.

551. The Executive Director said although the Management Task Force's function and budget would end in December, the secretariat would continue to manage the reform programme as part of the functions of the Executive Office, within existing resources and overall approved budgets during 1997. UNICEF was committed to sustaining the very encouraging progress made in the past 18 months. Given documentation deadlines, she proposed that the next MEP paper, to be presented at the first regular session of 1997 in January, contain immediate budgetary and organizational adjustments, and that progress made in the last three months of 1996 be reported on in her opening statement at the session.

552. Several delegations expressed appreciation for the detailed information found in the report, including the table reporting on action taken to date on the recommendations made by Booz•Allen & Hamilton. Many speakers supported the reform process and the secretariat's incremental approach, and expressed confidence in the capacity of the secretariat to implement the proposed

changes. Speakers highlighted the significant advances made to date, including the streamlining of headquarters and increased cost-efficiency. Several speakers welcomed the focus on country offices and supported the proposed roles for headquarters, regions and country offices, and also endorsed the focus of headquarters on more strategic and analytical functions. One speaker endorsed the principle of subsidiarity, making decisions closest to the point of action, as sound management practice.

553. One delegation requested a series of organigrams for headquarters, regional and country offices that would clearly show the structure of accountability and suggested that an "integrated accountability framework" be considered by the Executive Board. The speaker also stressed the need for more emphasis on monitoring and evaluation, strategic planning, financial resource management systems, human resources, the code of conduct and oversight functions. This speaker requested that the Executive Board have a comprehensive discussion on the role and functions of the Office of Evaluation, Policy and Planning, with special attention to the overall strategic planning function in UNICEF. Other speakers requested information on how checks and balances would be maintained within the proposed roles for different offices. One delegation expressed strong support for the development of a quality assurance function in UNICEF and asked for information on immediate priorities for quality assurance and how it would relate to functions carried out by the Office. Another speaker stressed the need to strengthen the role of UNICEF country representatives to enable them to act flexibly and efficiently. Several speakers said that area offices were useful and cost-effective and it was asked if area offices would continue to exist under the proposed changes.

554. A delegation said that the experiences of regional offices of other United Nations agencies made it necessary to consider locating UNICEF regional offices at headquarters rather than in regions. Another speaker said that regional directors should not see this as an opportunity to increase their own authority but rather to add value to country programmes. A delegation asked about the future relationship between the Executive Director and RMTs, and between the Executive Director and country representatives. One speaker asked about the capacity of regional offices to perform this new role for so many country offices and raised the subject of increased costs as an issue. Another delegation inquired about efficiency gains of moving some functions to regions. An analysis on the resources required was requested. Some speakers said that proposals on the roles of headquarters, regional and country offices needed to be discussed further before they could confirm their support, and suggested that this agenda item be postponed until the first regular session of 1997.

555. Questions were raised by a few speakers on how the secretariat planned to operationalize the proposals. A few delegations said that they were pleased to note that the implementation of the proposals would be accomplished within existing budget ceilings. Many speakers stressed the need for a strengthened oversight system and good management information systems between office locations to enable headquarters to monitor events in field offices. One delegation asked for an informal presentation on the Programme Manager System (known as "PROMS") at the first regular session of 1997.

556. The Executive Director replied that strengthening regional capacities did not imply increased size or costs, although it might mean redeployment of existing financial and human resources. She emphasized the need to strengthen regions in terms of improving the capacity to carry out functions, including making better use of talent in country offices. She stressed her commitment to ensuring the Board's involvement in the change process and keeping members informed of progress, and urged the Board to allow this process to continue. The proposals before the Board were an attempt to remove compartmentalization and hierarchy by clarifying roles and accountability for headquarters, regional and country offices. The secretariat would be pleased to report at

the annual session of 1997 on an accountability framework and on monitoring and evaluation functions. She was committed to keeping the Board up to date on action taken in relation to the Booz•Allen & Hamilton recommendations and agreed to provide an informal presentation of PROMS at the first regular session of 1997.

557. The Executive Director said that UNICEF had neither the intention nor the resources to create increased bureaucracy. She made the distinction between regional offices and the shared management responsibility of RMTs, which were comprised of all country representatives, staff representatives and led by the regional directors. She confirmed that area offices would continue to exist where appropriate.

558. The proposal that the Geneva office become the focal point for managing relations with National Committees for UNICEF received support from many delegations. A number of speakers expressed appreciation for the participatory process employed to develop the proposals. Several delegations requested that the secretariat reconsider the issue of allowing the establishment of National Committees in countries where there is a country programme of cooperation. A speaker suggested that further study be done on how to ensure a smooth transition between a country programme and the establishment of a National Committee.

559. Two speakers requested further discussion on the definition of key performance indicators. Another speaker supported the use of the indicators and output-oriented targets as useful for strengthening activities and changing the culture to a more outward-oriented approach. Questions were raised by a few delegations on the next steps for moving forward, emphasizing the need for the continued participation and involvement of National Committees in implementation of these proposals. A few speakers questioned the capacity of the Geneva office to carry out this new function and requested specific details on the restructuring of the Geneva office. Other speakers asked about coordination between National Committees and the Geneva office.

560. A representative of the Standing Group of National Committees stated that all 38 National Committees were pleased with the work of the secretariat in developing these proposals and thanked the members of the Executive Board for their contributions to the process. He said that the proposals were a faithful reflection of what had been agreed upon by the National Committees, which were committed to carry out their work based on the recognition agreement and on the principles of autonomy and subsidiarity. Two issues were essential to the success of the proposals: (a) the importance of engaging UNICEF and National Committee personnel in joint efforts when issues of mutual concern were to be addressed, and of the National Committees maintaining and developing existing consultation mechanisms such as the Standing Group and annual meeting for greater effectiveness and coordination; and (b) ensuring that the Geneva office has the necessary competencies and authority.

561. The Executive Director emphasized the need for UNICEF to create a capacity to coordinate globally and manage strategically relations with National Committees. The Geneva office had been identified as a strategic location where UNICEF could enhance relations with National Committees so that they could take on more importance in the overall UNICEF system. (See the annex, decisions 1996/32 and 1996/33 for the texts of the decisions adopted by the Executive Board.)

F. Oral progress report on the audit of the Kenya country office

562. The Executive Director made an oral report on the audit of the Kenya country office. She emphasized that after the recent mid-term review, the Kenya country programme now had far more focus, with only six components and a correspondingly reduced number of projects. The number of staff had been

reduced from 254 in January 1995 to 78 because of changed need and function. As a result of the audit, 23 staff had been summarily dismissed. Their cases had been referred to Kenyan authorities, who had assigned six officers to work on the cases. This demonstrated the seriousness with which they viewed them. The first case was about to go to trial.

563. The Kenya country office had reported that 43 of the 67 audit recommendations had been finalized in their entirety and work was in various stages of progress for the rest. To strengthen internal controls, the office had developed manuals for the guidance of staff in their day-to-day work. The office had been further strengthened with the recruitment of very qualified and experienced staff, including a new operations officer with a strong audit and operations background. A follow-up audit was in progress and the outcome would be presented to the Executive Board at its first regular session of 1997 in a written report.

564. A delegation asked that the written report include information on the internal controls now in place. Another delegation asked for more details of the general activities of UNICEF internal auditors. The Executive Director introduced the new head of the Office of Internal Audit, Mr. John Parsons, who was recruiting staff to fill some vacancies. The Office had been given an increased budget to permit contracting out and additional training. The auditors would be contributing to the MEP in a significant way. The Executive Director said that she would be pleased to give periodic updates to the Board on the activities of the audit service and, on Kenya, would give examples of the type of controls set out in the manuals which had been developed.

G. Oral report on the harmonization of budget presentations

565. The Comptroller gave an oral progress report on budget harmonization, as requested by the Executive Board in decision 1996/16. The decision specified that the report should include a comparison of budget presentations and of definitions of terms used by UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA, as well as an indication of steps needed for further harmonization. Subsequently, at both an informal briefing session and at the annual session of the Executive Board, requests were made for the working papers to be sent to members in advance in the three working languages. The secretariat had been able to comply with those requests with the exception of Working Paper 11, which reflected a number of key decisions on harmonization and was agreed on after the cut-off date for translation and transmittal of the papers.

566. The Comptroller identified the specific aspects on which the three agencies had come to an agreement, using the decision and the working papers as a framework. Working Papers 1 and 2, which provided the details and summary, respectively, of the comparison of the 1996-1997 budgets of the three organizations, provided the "road map" for the harmonization exercise. Decision 1996/16 had also requested a comparison of definitions of terms used by the three agencies, but the working group subsequently had decided that a more efficient approach would be to concentrate on developing agreed terms and related definitions, which were provided in Working Paper 7. As the work on harmonization progressed, additional terms and their definitions will be formulated.

567. Working Paper 9 reflected a common format for the resource plan. This aspect of harmonization had been reported on to the annual session of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board as well as to the Economic and Social Council. The proposed resource plan has three sections: (a) total resources available to the organization; (b) the use of resources, which represented the backbone of the harmonization effort and classified the activities of each organization under the headings of "programmes", "programme support" and "management and administration of the organization"; and (c) a reconciliation between estimates included under the section on use of resources and estimates included in the budget document.

568. Working Paper 6 set forth the agreed expenditure categories that would be used by the three organizations in the preparation of their 1998-1999 budgets. A list of the types of expenditure items that were to be included under each category was provided. All three organizations were in the process of developing new financial systems and accounting code structures that might result in subsequent changes in the expenditure categories now shown in Working Paper 6. However, the organizations had agreed that any resulting changes would be harmonized to ensure that all three would continue to use identical expenditure categories in future budgets.

569. Four additional aspects of budget harmonization were reflected in Working Paper 11. The first aspect related to the appropriation request; the three agencies had agreed that the budget document would include a common draft appropriation decision - the proposed wording of which was set forth in paragraph 1 of the working paper. The draft decision also reflected the agreed appropriation structure, which was based on the resource plan and was fully comparable among the three organizations.

570. The second aspect was the agreement that the total increase, decrease or variance between the amounts approved for the current biennium and the amounts proposed for the following biennium would be differentiated between changes due to volume and those due to cost. The third aspect dealt with appropriations for the current biennium. It was agreed that unless required by extraordinary circumstances or to meet requests of the Executive Board, appropriations for the current biennium would not be revised. The fourth aspect was common table formats; annexes II and III of Working Paper 11 showed proposed formats for two summary tables intended to support the appropriation request. The tables reflect what the working group considered to be the key information desired by members - estimates by appropriation line, main organizational unit and main expenditure category.

571. Another issue that the organizations had worked on concerned the scope and content of the budget and was related to the inclusion of information related to programme levels in the budget document. The organizations had agreed in principle to include this information in their budgets, but the specific details were still under discussion.

572. The steps needed for further harmonization were:

(a) The treatment of what is referred to as "other resources", reimbursements received for services rendered to third parties and income items;

(b) Post or staffing information to be included in the budget estimates;

(c) The treatment of specific recurrent issues such as identification of changes in post requirements and details on electronic data processing requirements;

(d) The level or degree of detail of estimates to be included in the budget document had yet to be determined. The need to reduce documentation must be weighed against providing members with information they considered adequate to support the budget. One approach might be to limit estimates included in the budget document to the summary level, with detailed information made available on request. The organizations would make proposals in this regard.

573. The related common table formats would be developed following decisions on the above-mentioned areas.

574. From the viewpoint of budget presentation, the last elements to be dealt with included the organization of the budget document and the selection of areas for graphical presentation so as to render the budget document as user-friendly as possible.

575. One additional area of harmonization already under discussion was the methodology to be used in the calculation of costs. "Costs" referred to such items as currency, inflation and various mandated adjustments.

576. The comments made by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the budgets of the organizations and the comments of the External Auditors on budget formulation had been taken into account by the working group in the discussion of the various harmonization issues. The three organizations were pleased with the progress achieved on harmonization, but hard and intensive work was before the key staff of the three organizations, who were devoting considerable time and effort to make the exercise a success.

577. Most delegations complimented the three agencies on the progress achieved on the harmonization of budget presentations. A delegation expressed satisfaction that a common framework had been agreed upon by the agencies, which can facilitate the comparison of information. The speaker suggested that the agencies could produce comparable ratios in one document. He commended the agencies for producing a common framework despite their differences in programme implementation. He sought clarification on the three main classification of activities (programmes, programme support, and management and administration), specifically in identifying how much of programme resources were spent on evaluation and on global activities. There should be comparability between the previously approved budgets and the proposed budgets using the new budget formats. He also suggested that harmonization could be pursued in other sectors such as personnel. The Comptroller replied that harmonization could possibly take place in other areas.

578. Most delegations were impressed with the working papers. Some of them suggested a follow-up mechanism on harmonization so that the process would continue. One speaker expressed interest in how the agencies would address the issue of the integrated budget with harmonization. The same speaker asked whether the percentages reflected under programme support activities in the resource plan (Working Paper 9, annex I), were indicative of the programme support costs incurred by the agencies. The Comptroller said that the percentages showed that the support costs of the three agencies were within range of each other.

579. One speaker expressed satisfaction with the one-page simplified format of the resource plan table. He said, however, that there would be trade-offs that the Executive Board should be willing to accept in terms of the degree of detail that would be provided in the budget documents. This trade-off would be related to the Board's new strategic approach in the use of information, however.

580. Asked about the date for the review of the issue by the Advisory Committee, the Comptroller said that no specific date had been given yet.

H. Oral status report on Greeting Card and related Operations

581. The Executive Director made an oral report on the external study of UNICEF cards and product sales activities, which was being undertaken by the firm of Coopers and Lybrand Consulting. The objectives of the study were to improve the GCO organizational structure and work processes; streamline the product development process; identify and optimize key markets; determine market priorities and brand management strategies; optimize the breadth and

depth of product lines; and evaluate channel strategies with the aim of improving greeting card and product sales to the private sector.

582. She said that a project steering committee, chaired by Mrs. Karin Sham Poo, Deputy Executive Director, had been formed to oversee the study process. Several National Committees for UNICEF as well as UNICEF staff were members of the committee. Coopers and Lybrand was also consulting with other National Committees and with staff at headquarters and in regional and country offices. Although the study was expected to be completed by the end of 1996, its findings would not be available in time for inclusion in the management excellence report to be submitted to the Board at its first regular session in January 1997. She would again present an oral report at that session.

583. The Executive Director introduced the new Director of GCO, Mr. Rolf Deutekom.

I. Discussion on the allocation of general resources

584. The Executive Board had before it a report on the allocation of general resources (E/ICEF/1996/CRP.30). The Director, Programme Division, in introducing the paper, said that the three basic criteria currently in use (child population, per capita GNP and under-five mortality rate (U5MR)) remained the most widely available, broadly acceptable and best suited to the UNICEF mandate and mission. However, two important modifications were proposed to make the application of the system more consistent and transparent by removing the distortions that had arisen over the years: (a) the weighting of the three basic criteria; and (b) a two-step approach to allocate 96 per cent of general resources. The remaining 4 per cent would be kept as a reserve to promote excellence in performance and to build in flexibility in responding to emerging opportunities. The modified system was intended to be implemented gradually.

585. Many delegations expressed appreciation for the report, which they said was comprehensive, constructive and of high quality. They supported the secretariat's approach of reviewing general resources allocations to make the process more transparent, systematic, universal and flexible.

586. Many speakers supported the three criteria and also expressed support for the principle of giving a higher priority to least developed countries (LDCs) and sub-Saharan Africa, reflecting the Mission Statement's emphasis. Many speakers said that this priority should not lessen support to other countries to achieve the goals of the World Summit for Children. Several speakers cited the principle of the universality of UNICEF. Two delegations said that the proposed modification was too modest and that UNICEF should give higher priority to LDCs and to Africa. One speaker said that by the year 2000, Africa should get 50 per cent of general resources.

587. Several delegations said that the modified system should be implemented as soon as possible. Another delegation said that the implementation of current country programmes should not be distorted and that the adjustment in general resources allocations should start with new CPRs.

588. A few delegations suggested that the discussion should not be limited to general resources, which accounted for only one half of UNICEF programme expenditure. One speaker said that Africa was not doing well in terms of attracting supplementary funds. Another speaker proposed that the availability of supplementary funds should be used as an additional criterion for the allocation of general resources.

589. A speaker said that the document should not be reviewed in terms of the interests of different regional groups. Another speaker said that given the trend of decreasing general resources, the issue was not which countries would

receive more general resources, but which would lose more. A delegation said that not only Africa would benefit from the modification. The secretariat said that the modification process should not be seen as allocating money to Africa that was taken from other developing countries. Every region had countries with decreased and/or increased general resources ceilings.

590. Several delegations asked what was meant by "distortion" of general resources allocations. Another speaker said that the modification was not clear enough and needed clarification. The secretariat said that the data on the three criteria for some countries had not been updated. Some countries had received increased ceilings because of new initiatives or because of increases in global general resources levels; those increases, which should have been reversed, had not been and had become permanent. With the decline in general resources, UNICEF did not decrease the countries' ceilings accordingly. The system was being cleared up gradually.

591. It was suggested that disparities within countries should be considered. Some delegations said that general resources allocations should be linked to the performance and the commitment of Governments, and requested that UNICEF study this qualitative approach. One speaker suggested that the analysis of resource allocations should be done by sectors and target groups. The same speaker expressed concern about the decline of resources for basic health care. Another speaker said that there was no indication of support for global activities with positive impacts on programmes. She suggested that when allocating general resources to a country, the availability of funds from other donors in that country also be considered. A few delegations proposed that UNICEF consider other indicators, including child poverty and the ratio of change in U5MR or GNP. The secretariat said that it was important to reward a Government's performance, but this would be better done on a case-by-case basis, using the reserve. The secretariat had computed resource allocations using the percentage of population having access to health care, the percentage of children reaching five grades of education and the percentage of population with access to water and sanitation, and the calculation had made little difference to the outcome. Furthermore, not all countries had reliable and available data on those indicators. To a suggestion that the weighting of a country's child population be removed, the secretariat said that doing so would result in the two most populous countries absorbing about 60 per cent of all general resources.

592. One delegation said that the correlation of U5MR with the rights of the child was low. Another delegation asked how the new role of UNICEF in promoting the Convention on the Rights of the Child as stated in paragraph 10 of the document was reflected in the new modification. The secretariat responded that the upper age threshold of child population had been adjusted from 16 to 18 years in the revised system. In promoting the Convention, UNICEF would play the role of an advocate in partnership with others. Such actions would not be measured by the amount of money provided.

593. Many delegations urged UNICEF to raise more funds for general resources. While they agreed that LDCs and Africa should get more resources, this should be done by raising more general resources, not by cutting allocations to other developing countries. Another speaker asked how the issue of sustainability had been considered. The secretariat agreed about the importance of increasing funds for general resources and of allocating available resources between different demands in a transparent and systematic manner.

594. Some delegations said that UNICEF could change the general resources planning levels for countries without necessarily modifying the criteria. One delegation, referring to decision 1996/26, which the secretariat had cited as the basis for the assessment, said that the secretariat had rushed too far by modifying the criteria. Many delegations said that the Executive Board should approve any change in the criteria for allocating general resources. The secretariat said that the review had been undertaken partly to respond to the

Board's request to discuss general resources allocation and partly to improve the current system. The discussion was an ongoing process in the secretariat.

595. A few speakers said that UNICEF support was a catalyst for raising local awareness and funds to support social development. In addition, UNICEF country programmes were developed and implemented in cooperation with Governments, and decreasing the current planning levels of country programmes would distort Governments' plans and efforts.

596. Many delegations said that the proposed revision was not simply a modification of the criteria for general resources allocation, but rather a major change in policy and strategy. Many also said that the subject was complicated and required more discussion before any decisions could be made. Several speakers requested an analysis of the implications of reducing minimum programme ceilings to $500,000. The secretariat said that there was no significant change in policy and strategy and that it was working within the framework of the three criteria approved by the Board. There was a need for flexibility in the minimum level for country programmes, depending on the availability of general resources and the overall situation.

597. A few delegations said that the 4 per cent reserve would be too limited to allow sufficient flexibility and suggested a minimum of 10 per cent. The secretariat said that the amount of the reserve could be increased at the Board's request. Some delegations also asked if graduation would mean the cessation of general resources allocations to countries or the end of the UNICEF presence in those countries. A speaker asked why the threshold for graduation had been set at a GNP per capita of $2,895, instead of using the new UNDP index of $4,700. The secretariat said that $2,895 was the threshold currently used by the World Bank to define upper-middle-income countries and that UNICEF graduation criteria also included a U5MR threshold rate of 30 per 1,000 live births. Meeting both criteria simultaneously would be more demanding than the current UNDP graduation criteria. Any decision about graduation would be made in consultation with Governments during preparation of country programmes or mid-term reviews. Graduation did not mean ending the UNICEF presence in a country, but rather a change in the nature of that presence and in the source of funding.

J. Working Group on Documentation

598. The "Report of the Working Group on Documentation" (E/ICEF/1996/21) was introduced by the delegate of France who represents the French linguistic group. He mentioned concerns about the lateness of documents and brought to the attention of the Board the UNDP decision on documentation (96/45 of 13 September 1996). He introduced the draft decision on this agenda item (E/ICEF/1996/CRP.32), citing the main changes to the decision contained in the report. It was, he said, an attempt to harmonize the issue of documentation with that of UNDP, taking into account the special nature of UNICEF.

599. Speakers addressing this subject commended the Working Group on its efforts and supported, in general, the proposal and harmonization in the area of documentation. Several delegations expressed concern about the strict page limits and the need for flexibility with regard to advance copies. It was also felt that the current practice of making documentation available to observers at the same time as Board members should be maintained. (See the annex, decision 1996/35, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

K. Programme of work for 1997

600. Under this agenda item, the Executive Board had before it document E/ICEF/1996/CRP.29. However, the discussion focused on a revised programme of

work for 1997 (E/ICEF/1996/CRP.33/Rev.1) that was submitted for Board approval by an informal working group of interested delegations. One delegation said that the revised programme of work provided an opportunity to improve the efficiency of the Board, noting that one major change was to reduce the second regular session from four days to two while ensuring that there was sufficient time allocated for substantive discussions.

601. Some delegations expressed support for having only three sessions per year, with one speaker wanting to see this instituted in 1998. Several other speakers, however, did not want the number of sessions to be reduced as they valued the opportunity for increased dialogue with the secretariat. The Executive Director said that she looked forward to maintaining an ongoing dialogue with the Board, while also inviting dialogue on a bilateral basis. Following debate on other suggested changes, the Board approved a revised programme of work for 1997. (See the annex, decision 1996/36, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

L. Other matters

Statement by Mrs. Graça Machel

602. Mrs. Graça Machel, the expert appointed by the Secretary-General to prepare a report on the impact of armed conflict on children, addressed the Executive Board to discuss her report. She said that the Secretary-General, the Executive Director, the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the High Commissioner for Refugees would join her when the Third Committee of the General Assembly took up the report on 11 November. In preparing the report, she had made field visits to Angola, Cambodia, Colombia, Lebanon, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, the United Republic of Tanzania, the former Yugoslavia and Zaire, as well as to Northern Ireland. In addition, regional consultations had been hosted by the Governments of Colombia, the Côte D'Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Italy and the Philippines.

603. The report's main findings and recommendations were clearly consistent with the UNICEF Anti-War Agenda and gave prominence to UNICEF work on behalf of children in emergency situations, as well as in situations of transition and post-conflict reconstruction. The report recognized that Governments bore the primary responsibility to protect children in those situations and to prevent conflicts from taking place. It documented the magnitude of the task and the need for United Nations agencies and civil society to support those efforts. It also distinguished the special role of UNICEF as the United Nations leading advocate for children.

604. She said that by giving visibility to children, the report provided an integrated perspective on human rights and humanitarian concerns and challenged traditional approaches to emergencies. As such, UNICEF and others were called upon to treat children as a distinct and priority concern in all interventions, including monitoring and reporting activities. The report called for a global campaign to stop the recruitment of children as soldiers. It also condemned the use of rape and other forms of gender-based violence and sexual exploitation as a weapon of war and called for its prosecution as a war crime. It proposed preventive measures and appropriate training and programme responses. The report called for an urgent international response to the estimated 30 million people who have been internally displaced as a result of armed conflict and recommended a programme for addressing the problem of land-mines. To ensure effective follow-up, it also recommended the establishment of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Children.

World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

605. The Executive Director reported briefly on the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, held in Stockholm from 27 to 31 August 1996. The Congress was hosted by the Government of Sweden and was co-sponsored by End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism and the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child. A total number of 1,880 participants attend the Congress, comprising 718 government representatives from 120 countries, 100 delegates from United Nations and other intergovernmental agencies, 470 NGO representatives, 47 delegates from youth organizations and the organizing bodies and 540 journalists from all over the world.

606. She said that this mix of people reflected not only the wide reach of the problem of commercial sexual exploitation of children, but also the dynamics of the solutions. Public awareness-raising, mobilization, networking and international cooperation will underpin the future of the work in this field. The nine major themes of the Congress were law reform enforcement; prevention and psycho-social rehabilitation; tourism and child prostitution; the sex exploiter; children and pornography; health; education; the role of the media; and human values.

607. Many UNICEF programmes already were part of the gamut of activities necessary to reduce vulnerability: girl child empowerment programmes, education of child and family, MCH and a wide range of development programmes designed to address the redistribution of wealth and income generation already tackle vulnerability at its roots. Programmes for the rehabilitation of child victims of exploitation and for retraining and reinsertion were also part of the UNICEF arsenal, and support in all those areas to NGO partners had been ongoing for some time. UNICEF follow-up would be part of existing country programmes in various countries.

608. Several delegations expressed support for the Congress and its outcome, and thanked both the Government of Sweden and UNICEF for their contribution to its success. The speakers stressed that the Congress was part of a process in which UNICEF had an important role both within the United Nations system and as a partner of Governments and NGOs in efforts to implement the Agenda for Action adopted by the Congress. The speakers saw UNICEF support in this area as a key component of activities related to child protection measures specified in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. They also endorsed the UNICEF focus on prevention, including a special emphasis on girls' education.

M. Concluding remarks

609. The Executive Director said that one of the most significant accomplishments of the session was the new process for approving CPRs. The secretariat, at headquarters and in country and regional offices, had found the Board's early involvement in the country programming process, through its comments on country notes, to be very positive. The approval of 40 recommendations on a "no objection" basis indicated, she hoped, both the success of the process and the quality of the country programmes. She also thanked the Board for its continued support for the MEP and for the commitment to maintaining its momentum. One of the overall aims of the change process was increased accountability and more efficient use of resources, and the Board's support for the various management teams and the delineation of responsibilities among headquarters, country offices and regional offices would, hopefully, lead to both. In addition, the secretariat had found the discussion on the allocation of general resources to be very useful and looked forward to close consultation with delegations as it developed the revised proposal to be presented to the Board next year.

610. The Executive Director thanked the President for his friendship and support throughout the year. She also thanked the other members of the Bureau, especially John Aggrey of Ghana and Hicham Hamdam of Lebanon, as those two members would be leaving the Board at the end of the year. A number of other delegations would also be leaving - Brazil, Burkina Faso, Canada, France, Romania and the United Kingdom - and she thanked them for their contribution to UNICEF.

611. The President said that the anniversary year had provided the Executive Board with an opportunity not only to assess the achievements of the last 50 years and the challenges that remain, but also to renew a common commitment to children. That commitment was demonstrated by the near-universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the progress made by many countries towards the goals set at the World Summit for Children. Throughout the year, the Board had taken over 30 decisions, affecting many different aspects of UNICEF work. Perhaps the most important was the very first decision taken in January, when the Board adopted the UNICEF Mission Statement, which was already reflected in activities throughout the organization. At the present session, for example, the Board had seen the influence of the Mission Statement in the discussion of the allocation of general resources and in the MEP, with its emphasis on making the best use of available resources to benefit children. The Executive Board was an important part of the UNICEF management team and it appreciated the Executive Director's openness and frankness in informing members about and involving them in the change process.

612. The President thanked all members of the Executive Board for their support and cooperation during the year. This good work had allowed the Board to keep alive one of its most important traditions - the adoption of all decisions by consensus, even those on somewhat sensitive issues. He acknowledged the contribution of the members of the Bureau - Mr. John Aggrey of Ghana, Mr. Dino Beti of Switzerland, Mr. Hicham Hamdam of Lebanon and Mrs. Lyda Aponte de Zacklin of Venezuela, as well as two members who left during the year - Mr. Jan Top Christensen of Denmark and Miss Mitra Vasisht of India. He also thanked the Executive Director and her team, especially the Deputy Executive Directors, the regional directors and the Office of the Secretary of the Executive Board.

Annex

DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD DURING 1996

Number	Title
	First regular session
1996/1.	UNICEF mission statement
1996/2.	UNICEF emergency services: mission and strategies
1996/3.	Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women
1996/4.	Reports to the Executive Board
1996/5.	Documentation
1996/6.	Documents for future Executive Board sessions
	Second regular session
1996/7.	Proposals for UNICEF cooperation and programme reviews
1996/8.	Annual report to the Economic and Social Council
1996/9.	1996 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award
1996/10.	Headquarters and regional offices budget for the biennium 1996-1997
1996/11.	Headquarters and regional offices budget for the biennium 1996-1997
1996/12.	General resources programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997
1996/13.	Supplementary-funded programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997
1996/14.	Additional allocation for the administrative and programme support budget for field offices
1996/15.	UNICEF communication and information programme
1996/16.	Harmonization of budget presentations
1996/17.	Extension of cooperation with Rotary International for polio eradication and extension of the Vaccine Independence Initiative
1996/18.	Commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the operations of the United Nations Children's Fund
1996/19.	Election of Executive Board representatives to the UNICEF/World Health Organization Joint Committee on Health Policy
1996/20.	Dates of Executive Board sessions

Number	Title
	Annual session
1996/21.	Follow-up to the World Summit for Children
1996/22.	Greeting Card and related Operations work plan and proposed budget for 1996
1996/23.	Report of the UNESCO/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education on its fifth meeting
1996/24.	Report of the UNICEF/WHO Joint Committee on Health Policy on its special session
1996/25.	Working group on documentation
1996/26.	Medium-term plan for the period 1996-1999
1996/27.	Children in need of special protection measures
1996/28.	Conceptual framework for UNICEF emergency interventions
	Third regular session
1996/29.	Proposals for UNICEF cooperation and programme reviews
1996/30.	International Child Development Centre
1996/31.	Outline of an implementation plan for the health strategy
1996/32.	UNICEF: management excellence process
1996/33.	National Committees for UNICEF
1996/34.	Allocation of general resources
1996/35.	Documentation
1996/36.	Programme of work for 1997

First regular session

1996/1. UNICEF mission statement

The Executive Board

Adopts the following statement on the mission of UNICEF, as contained in document E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.2:

THE MISSION OF UNICEF

UNICEF is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential.

UNICEF is guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and strives to establish children's rights as enduring ethical principles and international standards of behaviour towards children.

UNICEF insists that the survival, protection and development of children are universal development imperatives that are integral to human progress.

UNICEF mobilizes political will and material resources to help countries, particularly developing countries, ensure a "first call for children" and to build their capacity to form appropriate policies and deliver services for children and their families.

UNICEF is committed to ensuring special protection for the most disadvantaged children - victims of war, disasters, extreme poverty, all forms of violence and exploitation and those with disabilities.

UNICEF responds in emergencies to protect the rights of children. In coordination with United Nations partners and humanitarian agencies, UNICEF makes its unique facilities for rapid response available to its partners to relieve the suffering of children and those who provide their care.

UNICEF is non-partisan and its cooperation is free of discrimination. In everything it does, the most disadvantaged children and the countries in greatest need have priority.

UNICEF aims, through its country programmes, to promote the equal rights of women and girls and to support their full participation in the political, social and economic development of their communities.

UNICEF works with all its partners towards the attainment of the sustainable human development goals adopted by the world community and the realization of the vision of peace and social progress enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

First regular session
22 January 1996

1996/2. UNICEF emergency services: mission and strategies

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the information contained in the report on UNICEF emergency services: mission and strategies (E/ICEF/1996/4) presented to the Board at its first regular session of 1996;

2. Requests the secretariat to present a conceptual framework, including guiding principles and methodologies, for UNICEF emergency interventions (two pages) to be presented to the Board at its annual session of 1996;

3. Requests further the secretariat to formulate operational papers (two pages) on a number of issues, as listed in the annex to the present decision, to be presented for information, when completed, to relevant sessions of the Board during the period from 1996 to 1997;

4. Urges UNICEF, in close cooperation with the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) and other relevant agencies and organizations of the United Nations system, to facilitate the implementation of Economic and Social Council decision 1995/56, *inter alia*, through coordinated reporting to the 1996 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council.

Annex

SUBJECTS OF OPERATIONAL PAPERS TO BE PREPARED DURING 1996-1997

As a complement to the indicative list presented with Economic and Social Council decision 1995/56: Strengthening of the Coordination of the Emergency Humanitarian Assistance of the United Nations, adopted by the Council at its substantive session of 1995, the following operational papers will be considered:

1. Rapid response capacity;
2. Capacity-building;
3. Coordination:
    - (a) Coordination at field level;
    - (b) Inter-agency coordination and DHA;
4. Niche and comparative advantage;
5. Prevention and preparedness (including conflict prevention);
6. Protection of children in conflict situations;
7. Processes:
    - (a) How is an emergency defined?;
    - (b) When is an emergency declared?;
    - (c) Post-crisis recovery and development;
    - (d) How are funds reprogrammed/allocated?;
8. Balance between long-term development and emergency assistance.

First regular session
24 January 1996

1996/3. Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women

The Executive Board

1. Reaffirms that UNICEF follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women should be based on policies in, *inter alia*, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (E/ICEF/1994/L.5 and Add.1), policy review papers on basic education (E/ICEF/1995/16) and the health strategy for UNICEF (E/ICEF/1995/11/Rev.1), UNICEF follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development (E/ICEF/1995/12/Rev.1), and UNICEF policy on family planning (E/ICEF/1993/5), safe motherhood (E/ICEF/1990/L.13) and prevention of HIV/AIDS (E/ICEF/1992/L.11);

2. Endorses the framework for follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women as presented in document E/ICEF/1996/3, and taking into account the comments made by Board members and the explanations provided by the secretariat, emphasizing priorities in advocacy and programming to girls' education, health of the girl child, adolescent girls and women, and children's and women's rights;

3. Encourages UNICEF to strengthen its partnerships, coordination and collaboration with all agencies and entities of the United Nations system, each according to its mandate and to its own comparative advantage, and non-governmental organizations which are actively involved in the implementation of the Platform for Action of the Conference;

4. Requests the Executive Director to report to the Executive Board in 1997 on the process undertaken to integrate the Beijing Platform for Action in UNICEF country programmes, taking into account the United Nations commitment to an integrated follow-up of United Nations conferences.

First regular session
25 January 1996

1996/4. Reports to the Executive Board

The Executive Board

Takes note of the following reports:

(a) "Follow-up to the decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1995" (E/ICEF/1996/6);

(b) "The fiftieth anniversary of UNICEF" (E/ICEF/1996/5);

(c) "Progress report on the audit of the Kenya country office" (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.1).

First regular session
25 January 1996

1996/5. Documentation

The Executive Board

1. Takes into account the recent decision 96/06 of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund (UNDP/UNFPA);

2. Recalls the importance of strict observance of the resolutions and rules establishing language arrangements for the different bodies and organs of the United Nations, in particular General Assembly resolution 50/11;

3. Requests the Executive Director of UNICEF to collaborate closely with the working group on document distribution issues, to be established by and together with the Administrator of UNDP and the Executive Director of UNFPA, with the participation of the departments concerned and in association with representatives of the linguistic groups;

4. Requests the Executive Director to submit a report to the Executive Board at its annual session in 1996 on the status of this issue and to propose concrete solutions.

First regular session
25 January 1996

1996/6. Documents for future Executive Board sessions

The Executive Board

1. Decides to discontinue the following documents:

(a) "Reduction of outstanding balances through savings or cancellations and funds to cover overexpenditures on approved projects";

(b) "Report on the use of general resources for projects approved for supplementary funding";

(c) "Review of expenditures in excess of commitments and unspent commitments for completed projects financed by supplementary funds";

2. Decides further to defer consideration of the following reports to the third regular session of 1996:

(a) A report on implementation of the health strategy for UNICEF (decision 1995/28);

(b) All issues relating to the follow-up exercise to the management review of the Greeting Card and related Operations, including those identified in decisions 1995/20 and 1995/25.

First regular session
25 January 1996

1996/7. Proposals for UNICEF cooperation and programme reviews

The Executive Board

Approves the following recommendations of the Executive Director for programme cooperation as summarized in documents E/ICEF/1996/P/L.43, E/ICEF/1996/P/L.43/Corr.1, E/ICEF/1996/P/L.43/Add.1 and E/ICEF/1996/P/L.43/Add.1/Corr.1:

(a) $841,000 for general resources funding and $490,000 for supplementary funding for programme cooperation in Africa, as follows:

Country	Period	General resources	Supplementary funds	Document E/ICEF/1996/
Zambia	1996	841 000		P/L.44
Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office	1996-1998		490 000	P/L.45

(b) $18,479,000 for general resources funding and $92,301,000 for supplementary funding for programme cooperation in the Americas and the Caribbean, as follows:

Country	Period	General resources	Supplementary funds	Document E/ICEF/1996/
Honduras	1996-2000	4 850 000	10 701 000	P/L.46
Mexico	1996-2001	6 280 000	40 400 000	P/L.47
Nicaragua	1996	119 000		P/L.48
Peru	1996-2000	5 380 000	40 000 000	P/L.49
Venezuela	1996-1997	1 850 000	1 200 000	P/L.50

(c) $117,470,000 for general resources funding and $234,138,000 for supplementary funding for programme cooperation in Asia, as follows:

Country	Period	General resources	Supplementary funds	Document E/ICEF/1996/
Cambodia	1996-2000	11 550 000	61 700 000	P/L.51
India	1996-1997	71 600 000	137 400 000	P/L.52
Pakistan	1996-1998	34 320 000	35 038 000	P/L.53

(d) $16,900,000 for general resources funding and $54,150,000 for supplementary funding for programme cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States, as follows:

Country	Period	General resources	Supplementary funds	Document E/ICEF/1996/
Albania	1996-2000	4 850 000	10 000 000	P/L.54
Bosnia and Herzegovina and area office	1996-1998	5 025 000	16 650 000	P/L.55
Croatia	1996-1998		8 400 000	P/L.56
Georgia	1996-2000	4 850 000	6 650 000	P/L.57
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	1996-1998	2 175 000	4 050 000	P/L.58
Federal Republic of Yugoslavia	1996-1998		8 400 000	P/L.59

(e) $156,000 for general resources for programme cooperation in the Middle East and North Africa, as follows:

Country	Period	General resources	Supplementary funds	Document E/ICEF/1996/
Lebanon	1996	156 000		P/L.60

Second regular session
9-10 April 1996

1996/8. Annual report to the Economic and Social Council

The Executive Board

Takes note of the "Report of the Executive Director: Annual report to the Economic and Social Council" (E/ICEF/1996/10 (Part II)), and decides to transmit it to the Economic and Social Council, together with the comments made by delegations at the present session.

Second regular session
12 April 1996

1996/9. 1996 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award

The Executive Board

1. Decides to present the 1996 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award to the Centre régional pour le développement et la santé (Regional Centre for Health and Development) of Benin;

2. Approves an allocation of $25,000 from general resources for that purpose.

Second regular session
12 April 1996

1996/10. Headquarters and regional offices budget for the biennium 1996-1997

The Executive Board

1. Welcomes the progress made towards greater transparency in the UNICEF budget and greater clarity in the budget document and requests the Executive Director to consider how further progress may be made;

2. Takes note of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.7);

3. Resolves:

(a) That the headquarters and regional offices budget for the biennium 1996-1997 is approved as follows:

		(In thousands of United States dollars)
Part I	Programme assistance	5 707
Part II	Programme support	165 817
Part III	Management and administration	174 476
	Total expenditures	346 000

(b) That for the biennium 1996-1997, a commitment of $346.0 million for the budget is approved;

(c) That the Executive Director be authorized to administer in the most efficient manner the provisions under each of parts I, II and III. The Executive Director may be authorized, without further authorization of the Executive Board, to transfer, if necessary, into any one of parts I, II and III, an amount not exceeding 5 per cent from these same parts, or to transfer into part I any amounts from parts II or III. The amount in part II may be revised upward or downward in line with the recovery from packing and assembly activities (decision 1996/11). In exceptional circumstances, the Executive Board may be consulted by mail poll;

4. Strongly reaffirms the policy commitment of UNICEF to assist sustaining the implementation of the Bamako Initiative in the field and the necessity in this light to preserve, at all appropriate levels in the organization, professional assistance, with a requisite technical and managerial capacity to do so;

5. Requests the Executive Director, following the reports of the accountability and structural studies under the management excellence process, to submit a report to the Executive Board on proposals for a revised and rationalized organizational structure of UNICEF, including health sector;

6. Urges the Executive Director to do her utmost to absorb further revisions of the headquarters and regional offices budget during the biennium 1996-1997 within the established limit of $346.0 million and to inform the Executive Board at a very early stage about possible revisions. Revisions to be decided upon should be submitted to the Executive Board after review by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions;

7. Notes that the actual percentage decrease in resources allocated to the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Office is not reflected in the 1996-1997 integrated budget and requests the Executive Director to ensure that future budget reports reflect the actual percentage changes in resources allocated to the regional offices;

8. Requests the Executive Director to continue consultations with the Executive Board about the integrated budgeting in UNICEF, in particular in the context of the elaboration of the integrated budget for field offices, and to take the results of these consultations into account when preparing the budget for the 1998-1999 biennium.

Second regular session
12 April 1996

1996/11. Headquarters and regional offices budget for the biennium 1996-1997

The Executive Board

Resolves that, for the biennium 1996-1997, the recovery from packing and assembly activities is approved as follows:

	(In thousands of United States dollars)
Recovery from packing and assembly activities	18 000

Second regular session
12 April 1996

1996/12. General resources programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997

The Executive Board

Resolves that, in view of the integrated budget proposed for headquarters and regional offices, a budget of $29,540,000 from general resources is approved for allocation to field offices as follows:

	(In thousands of United States dollars)
Emergency Programme Fund	25 000
Special Adjustment Facility for Latin America and the Caribbean	3 540
Higher-income countries	1 000
Total	29 540

Second regular session
12 April 1996

1996/13. Supplementary-funded programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997

The Executive Board

Resolves:

(a) That the following amounts be raised from supplementary funds for the biennium 1996-1997:

(In thousands of United States dollars)

	Headquarters	Region	Field	Total
Regional offices	NA	12 000	NA	12 000
Special Adjustment Facility for Latin America and the Caribbean	NA	NA	7 000	7 000
Subtotal	NA	12 000	7 000	19 000
Programme Funds for the 1990s Goals				
Health	5 200	NA	36 800	42 000
Nutrition	800	NA	4 200	5 000
Water supply and sanitation	300	NA	1 700	2 000
Education	500	NA	4 500	5 000
Intersectoral	1 500	NA	7 200	8 700
Subtotal	8 300	NA	54 400	62 700
Total	8 300	12 000	61 400	81 700

(b) That for the biennium 1996-1997, a total recommendation of $81.7 million for supplementary funding is approved; if necessary, funds in excess of indicated amounts for specific programme areas and regions can be received provided that the total amount of funds received is within the approved limit.

Second regular session
12 April 1996

1996/14. Additional allocation for the administrative and programme support budget for field offices

The Executive Board

Resolves:

(a) That an additional allocation of $715,900 is approved for additional offices in the region of Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States for the 1996-1997 biennium;

(b) That the secretariat is authorized to establish three liaison offices in Minsk (Belarus), in Moscow (Russian Federation) and in Kiev (Ukraine);

(c) That the additional allocation of $715,900 can be added to the approved 1996-1997 budget of $174.8 million for field offices (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1, decision 1995/31).

Second regular session
12 April 1996

1996/15. UNICEF communication and information programme

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of paragraph 11 of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.7);

2. Reaffirms the importance of public information and advocacy measures to promote increased awareness and better understanding of the activities of UNICEF;

3. Requests the Executive Director in this context to take into consideration the accessibility and the linguistic balances in the development of the electronic dissemination of information;

4. Encourages the Executive Director to present an information and publication policy, in the context of the mandate of UNICEF and the results of the Communications Project Team of the Management Excellence Programme, and in consultation with interested delegations, so that account will be taken of the need to prioritize its publications, with special attention to the risk of duplication with other publications of the United Nations and the financial and human constraints of the Fund;

5. Requests the Executive Director to submit to the Executive Board prior to examination of the biennial budget estimates for 1998-1999, the policy document referred to in paragraph 4 above;

6. Further requests the Executive Director to present in the document of the biennial budget estimates for 1998-1999 the detailed costs of publications and of their distribution.

Second regular session
12 April 1996

1996/16. Harmonization of budget presentations

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the oral progress report provided by the secretariat on budget harmonization;

2. Takes into account the time constraints involved in the submission of the initial proposals for action to the Executive Board through the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions scheduled for the third regular session of 1996 in accordance with decision 1995/37 (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1);

3. Requests the Executive Director to submit the initial proposals on harmonization for action by the Executive Board at its first regular session in January 1997, through the Advisory Committee;

4. Further requests the Executive Director to present an oral progress report, with working papers, to the Executive Board at the third regular session in September 1996. The report will include a comparison of budget presentations and of definitions of terms used by UNICEF, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), as well as an indication of steps that are needed for further harmonization;

5. Further requests that a joint progress report of the secretariats to the Economic and Social Council at its 1996 substantive session would include the progress made by the three agencies towards harmonization, taking into account the debates of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA and UNICEF during their second regular sessions of 1996.

Second regular session
12 April 1996

1996/17. Extension of cooperation with Rotary International for polio eradication and extension of the Vaccine Independence Initiative

The Executive Board

1. Approves a five-year extension of the programme of cooperation with the PolioPlus programme of Rotary International for the period 1996 to 2000, as described in document E/ICEF/1996/P/L.62, in accordance with the original Board document (E/ICEF/1990/P/L.35), and an increase of $60 million in the supplementary funding programme amount, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions from Rotary International;

2. Also approves a five-year extension of the Vaccine Independence Initiative for the period 1996 to 2000, as described in document E/ICEF/1996/P/L.62, and an amount of $10 million in supplementary funding, as described in the "round-up" paper (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.43/Corr.1). This extension is in accordance with the terms of the original Board document (E/ICEF/1991/P/L.41), without any changes, so that it may continue to offer countries the possibility of procuring vaccines with their own currencies to meet global disease control goals.

Second regular session
12 April 1996

1996/18. Commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the operations of the United Nations Children's Fund

The Executive Board

1. Recommends to the General Assembly that it allocate a plenary meeting during its fifty-first session (1996) to the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the operations of the United Nations Children's Fund;

2. Requests the Executive Director to make all the necessary preparations for this commemoration on the understanding that there are no financial implications.

Second regular session
12 April 1996

1996/19. Election of Executive Board representatives to the UNICEF/World Health Organization Joint Committee On Health Policy

The Executive Board

Decides to elect to the UNICEF/World Health Organization Joint Committee on Health Policy for the remainder of the 1995-1996 biennium from the Asian group of States: Dr. Suyono Yahya, as member, and Dr. Nyoman Kumara Rai, as alternate, both from Indonesia.

Second regular session
12 April 1996

1996/20. Dates of Executive Board sessions

The Executive Board

1. Decides to change the dates of the 1996 annual session from 3-7 June to 17-21 June in view of the scheduling of the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II);

2. Also decides to approve the following dates for its 1997 sessions: first regular session, 20-24 January; second regular session, 17-21 March; annual session, 2-6 June; and third regular session, 8-12 September.

Second regular session
12 April 1996

Annual session

1996/21. Follow-up to the World Summit for Children

The Executive Board

1. Urges all Governments that have not yet completed the national process of review of progress towards implementation of the Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children to do so during 1996 and also urges all countries to develop feasible and sustainable strategies and programmes to achieve the nationally adapted goals for children for the year 2000;

2. Requests the Executive Director, in consultation with all concerned parties, to extend full support to the Secretary-General in his reporting of progress made on the Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children to the General Assembly on 30 September 1996, and to encourage all partners to make every effort to use the lessons learned from the mid-decade review to develop strategies and actions to achieve the goals for the year 2000.

Annual session
17 June 1996

1996/22. Greeting Card and related Operations work plan and proposed budget for 1996

A. Greeting Card and related Operations (GCO) budgeted expenditures for the 1996 season

The Executive Board

1. Approves for the fiscal year 1 May 1996 to 30 April 1997 budgeted expenditures of $99.8 million as detailed below and summarized in column II of annex I to document E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.11:

	(In millions of United States dollars)
Director's Office	0.8
Product Line and Marketing	59.6
Private Sector Fund-raising	10.5
Operations and Finance	14.4
Subtotal	85.3
Non-operating expenses:	
Market Development Programme	4.0
Fund-raising Development Programme	7.8
Exhibits	0.2
Office move related costs	0.7
GCO share in UNICEF administration costs	0.3
Central and Eastern European National Committees Development Programme	1.5
Subtotal	14.5
Total expenditures, consolidated a/	99.8

---

a/ For details, see table 1A of document E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.11.

2. Authorizes the Executive Director:

(a) To incur expenditures as summarized in column II of annex I to document E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.11 and to increase the expenditures up to the level indicated in column III of annex I to the same document, should the apparent net proceeds from product sales and/or private sector fund-raising increase to the levels indicated in column III of annex I, and, accordingly, to reduce expenditures below the level indicated in column II to the extent necessary, should the net proceeds decrease;

(b) To transfer funds when necessary between the various budgets as detailed under paragraph 1 above;

(c) To spend an additional amount between Executive Board sessions, when necessary, owing to currency fluctuations, to ensure the continued operation of GCO;

(d) To personally approve actual expenditure of the travel and per diem costs of National Committee participants at the annual Greeting Card Workshops and related meetings.

B. *Budgeted income for the 1996 season*

The Executive Board

Notes that for the fiscal year 1 May 1996 to 30 April 1997, GCO net proceeds are budgeted at $274.4 million as shown in column II of annex I to document E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.11.

C. *Policy issues*

The Executive Board

1. *Approves* the changes in posts with a net increase of 8 posts as indicated in table 2 of document E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.11;

2. *Renews* the Fund-raising Development Programme with $7.8 million established for 1996;

3. *Renews* the Market Development Programme with $4.0 million established for 1996;

4. *Renews* the Central and Eastern European National Committees Development Programme, which includes 10 countries, with a budget of $1.5 million established for 1996;

5. *Approves* the change of the GCO fiscal year from 1 May-30 April to 1 January-31 December;

6. *Authorizes* the Executive Director to incur expenditures in the 1996 fiscal year related to cost of goods delivered (production/purchase of raw materials, cards and other products) for the 1997 fiscal year up to $45 million as indicated in the GCO medium-term plan (see table 13 of document E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.11).

7. *Encourages* GCO to work together with National Committees to ensure that a far larger proportion of funds raised by them are channelled to UNICEF general resources.

Annual session
19 June 1996

1996/23. *Report of the UNESCO/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education on its fifth meeting*

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education on its fifth meeting held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris on 6 and 7 May 1996 (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.63) and the recommendations contained therein.

Annual session
20 June 1996

1996/24. Report of the UNICEF/WHO Joint Committee on Health Policy on its special session

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the report of the UNICEF/World Health Organization (WHO) Joint Committee on Health Policy on its special session held at WHO Headquarters in Geneva on 15 and 16 May 1996 (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.64) and the recommendations contained therein.

Annual session
20 June 1996

1996/25. Working group on documentation

The Executive Board

Takes note of the interim report of the working group on documentation and the comments made thereon by the Executive Board at its 1996 annual session and encourages the working group on documentation to finalize its work and present a report, including recommendations, to the Executive Board at its third regular session of 1996.

Annual session
20 June 1996

1996/26. Medium-term plan for the period 1996-1999

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the medium-term plan (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.10), which constitutes a flexible framework for supporting UNICEF programmes, as well as the comments made by the delegations during the discussions on the report of the Executive Director;

2. Emphasizes the importance of the link between the implementation of the medium-term plan and the ongoing process and the expected outcomes of the Management Excellence Programme;

3. Underlines the necessity to engage in a debate on the overall funding and the allocation of financial resources, including the allocation for administrative and programme support costs;

4. Encourages, in this context, the Executive Director to ensure that, during the financial medium-term plan, the level of management and administrative costs does not exceed the current level in nominal terms;

5. Approves with this last provision the financial medium-term plan as a framework of projections for 1996-1999 (summarized in table 3 of document E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.10), including the preparation of up to $332 million in programme expenditures from general resources to be submitted to the Executive Board in 1997 (shown in table 2, item 3, of document E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.10). The amount is subject to the availability of resources and to the condition that estimates of income and expenditure made in this plan continue to be valid.

Annual session
20 June 1996

1996/27. Children in need of special protection measures

The Executive Board,

Having considered the review of UNICEF policies and strategies on children in need of special protection measures (E/ICEF/1996/14),

Recalling the tasks of UNICEF as reflected in relevant decisions as well as in the Mission Statement,

1. Endorses the perspective, policies and strategies presented in the document regarding measures to protect children from the risk of exploitation, violence, abuse, abandonment and other forms of special disadvantage, emphasizing that the special protection measures should be implemented within the framework of the rights of children;

2. Requests the Executive Director to take the necessary steps to:

(a) Incorporate the policies and strategies in document E/ICEF/1996/14 in all relevant UNICEF programmes through mainstreaming and the further development of preventive and protection programmes for all children, especially targeted towards those in need of special protection measures;

(b) Enhance UNICEF capacities to assist all member States in analysing the situation of children in need of special protection measures and in implementing policies and strategies to that end, where appropriate, in the context of the country programming process;

(c) Monitor UNICEF activities in the implementation of these policies and strategies at the country level through existing processes such as mid-term reviews;

(d) Strengthen UNICEF partnerships with agencies of the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations, all sectors of civil society and others who are active in the issues of children in need of special protection measures;

3. Further requests the Executive Director to report back to the Executive Board at its 1997 annual session on the steps taken within the framework of paragraph 2 above and, simultaneously, to present to the Board a plan and a time-frame for further implementation of these policies and strategies.

Annual session
20 June 1996

1996/28. Conceptual framework for UNICEF emergency interventions

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the conceptual framework for UNICEF emergency interventions (E/ICEF/1996/16) as well as the comments made by delegations during the consideration of the document;

2. Requests the secretariat to finalize all the operational papers identified in decision 1996/2 (E/ICEF/1996/12 (Part I)) and present these papers to the Executive Board at its first regular session in 1997 in a consolidated form, reflecting a clear conceptual framework together with its operational implications.

Annual session
20 June 1996

Third regular session

1996/29. Proposals for UNICEF cooperation and programme reviews

The Executive Board

Approves the following recommendations of the Executive Director for programme cooperation as summarized in document E/ICEF/1996/P/L.43/Add.2:

(a) $198,900,000 for general resources funding and $333,344,000 for supplementary funding for programme cooperation in Africa, as follows:

Country	Period	General resources	Supplementary funds	Document E/ICEF/1996/
Angola	1997-1998	5 500 000	30 000 000	P/L.65
Central African Republic	1997-2001	5 000 000	5 114 000	P/L.9/Add.1
Comoros	1997-2001	3 750 000	2 400 000	P/L.1/Add.1
Congo	1997-1998	2 000 000	1 200 000	P/L.67
Côte d'Ivoire	1997-2001	10 250 000	10 000 000	P/L.10/Add.1
Gabon	1997-2001	3 750 000	3 750 000	P/L.11/Add.1
Gambia	1997-1998	1 500 000	2 460 000	P/L.68
Guinea	1997-2001	7 400 000	8 036 000	P/L.12/Add.1
Lesotho	1997-2001	5 000 000	14 600 000	P/L.2/Add.1
Liberia	1997-1998	2 000 000	2 500 000	P/L.69
Malawi	1997-2001	14 750 000	33 250 000	P/L.3/Add.1
Namibia	1997-2001	5 000 000	25 000 000	P/L.4/Add.1
Nigeria	1997-2001	67 000 000	15 000 000	P/L.13/Add.1
Sao Tome and Principe	1997-2001	3 750 000	1 770 000	P/L.5/Add.1
Senegal	1997-2001	5 080 000	30 764 000	P/L.14/Add.1
Somalia	1997-1998	5 000 000	35 000 000	P/L.66
South Africa	1997-2001	5 200 000	20 000 000	P/L.6/Add.1
Togo	1997-2001	5 000 000	5 000 000	P/L.15/Add.1
United Republic of Tanzania	1997-2001	31 720 000	40 000 000	P/L.7/Add.1
Zambia	1997-2001	10 250 000	47 500 000	P/L.8/Add.1

(b) $53,750,000 for general resources funding and $145,602,000 for supplementary funding for programme cooperation in the Americas and the Caribbean, as follows:

Country	Period	General resources	Supplementary funds	Document E/ICEF/1996/
Argentina	1997-2001	5 000 000	20 000 000	P/L.16/Add.1
Belize	1997-2001	3 750 000	1 800 000	P/L.17/Add.1
Chile	1997-2001	5 000 000	3 000 000	P/L.18/Add.1
Costa Rica	1997-2001	3 750 000	3 750 000	P/L.19/Add.1
Cuba	1997-2001	5 000 000	10 000 000	P/L.20/Add.1
Dominican Republic	1997-2001	5 000 000	5 000 000	P/L.21/Add.1
El Salvador	1997-2001	5 000 000	12 000 000	P/L.22.Add.1
Guatemala	1997-2001	5 000 000	26 252 000	P/L.23/Add.1
Jamaica	1997-2001	3 750 000	10 000 000	P/L.24/Add.1
Nicaragua	1997-2001	5 000 000	18 000 000	P/L.25/Add.1
Panama	1997-2001	3 750 000	6 250 000	P/L.26/Add.1
Uruguay	1997-2001	3 750 000	2 850 000	P/L.27/Add.1
Amazon subregional	1997-2001		20 000 000	P/L.70

Country	Period	General resources	Supplementary funds	Document E/ICEF/1996/
Central America and Panama:				
Water supply/ sanitation	1997-2001		2 500 000	P/L.70
Micronutrients	1997-2001		4 200 000	P/L.70

(c) $43,257,649 for general resources funding and $74,689,000 for supplementary funding for programme cooperation in Asia, as follows:

Country	Period	General resources	Supplementary funds	Document E/ICEF/1996/
Bhutan	1997-2001	5 000 000	9 100 000	P/L.31/Add.1
Lao People's Democratic Republic	1997	1 040 000	1 523 000	P/L.71
Malaysia	1997-2000	3 000 000	850 000	P/L.28/Add.1
Mongolia	1997-2001	3 750 000	4 500 000	P/L.29/Add.1
Nepal	1997-2001	18 400 000	34 216 000	P/L.32/Add.1
Pacific island countries	1997-2001	7 000 000	14 000 000	P/L.30/Add.1
Sri Lanka	1997-2001	5 000 000	10 500 000	P/L.33/Add.1
	1996	67 649		P/L.33/Add.1

(d) $8,670,000 for general resources funding and $12,600,000 for supplementary funding for programme cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States, as follows:

Country	Period	General resources	Supplementary funds	Document E/ICEF/1996/
Moldova	1997-2001	3 750 000	5 000 000	P/L.34/Add.1
Turkey	1997-2000	4 920 000	7 600 000	P/L.35/Add.1

(e) $43,010,000 for general resources funding and $61,000,000 for supplementary funding for programme cooperation in the Middle East and North Africa, as follows:

Country	Period	General resources	Supplementary funds	Document E/ICEF/1996/
Iraq	1997-1998	2 000 000	10 000 000	P/L.72
Lebanon	1997-2001	5 000 000	12 500 000	P/L.36/Add.1
Morocco	1997-2001	7 360 000	11 000 000	P/L.37/Add.1
Oman	1997-2000	4 000 000		P/L.38/Add.1
Sudan	1997-2001	19 650 000	25 000 000	P/L.39/Add.1
Tunisia	1997-2001	5 000 000	2 500 000	P/L.40/Add.1

Third regular session
16 September 1996

1996/30. International Child Development Centre

The Executive Board,

Having reviewed the report on the "International Child Development Centre: progress report and proposed activities for 1997-1999" (E/ICEF/1996/20),

Authorizes a three-year extension for the Centre for the period 1997-1999, with a total allocation of $10.5 million in supplementary funding, of which 10.5 billion lire (approximately $6.7 million) has been pledged by the Government of Italy, for the Centre's core activities, with the remainder to be sought from other donors for specific activities.

Third regular session
18 September 1996

1996/31. Outline of an implementation plan for the health strategy

The Executive Board

Takes note of the "Outline of an implementation plan for the health strategy" (E/ICEF/1996/19) and the comments made by delegations on the outline.

Third regular session
18 September 1996

1996/32. UNICEF: management excellence process

The Executive Board

1. *Affirms* General Assembly resolution 50/120 of 20 December 1995 on the triennial policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system and Economic and Social Council decision 1996/42 of 26 July 1996 on the programme on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/120;

2. *Takes note* of the progress report of the Executive Director on the management excellence process (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.13);

3. *Notes* with appreciation the extensive and innovative process of consultation with the Executive Board and other partners undertaken by the secretariat since the launching of the Management Excellence Programme (MEP);

4. *Endorses* the incremental approach adopted by the secretariat to implement the MEP and *welcomes* the tangible results achieved so far, as documented in the various progress reports provided to date by the secretariat to the Executive Board;

5. *Requests* the secretariat to present to the Executive Board at its second regular session and at its annual session in 1997 an oral report, accompanied by a conference room paper, which contains a set of organigrams reflecting the current status of the organizational changes to date, as well as the lines of communication and responsibility for UNICEF as a whole, and

individually at the headquarters, regional, and country levels. This conference room paper should include:

(a) Budget implications as applicable;

(b) Human resources implications (including recruitment, training and staff redeployment);

(c) Efficiency gains as applicable, including the functions of backstopping and supervision;

(d) Effectiveness gains with respect to national capacity-building, coordination and harmonization of United Nations operational activities at the country level;

(e) Experiences of the regional bodies of other United Nations agencies, funds and programmes;

6. Recognizes that this conference room paper will continue to be refined as the implementation of the MEP progresses, and that it will be updated in future MEP progress reports;

7. Reaffirms that the country programme is the primary strength of UNICEF and that a fundamental objective of the MEP is to ultimately reinforce country office capacity to effectively and efficiently manage and deliver country programmes and to make country offices clearly accountable for their role in producing results at the country level;

8. Agrees that management teams led by country representatives, regional management teams led by regional directors, and the Global Management Team led by the Executive Director constitute an appropriate UNICEF governance system for integrating the work of the secretariat, determining management priorities, providing oversight, and monitoring and evaluating the performance of UNICEF offices;

9. Stresses that the national Governments have the fundamental responsibility for the preparation of country programmes and for coordinating external assistance in accordance with their strategies and national priorities;

10. Requests the secretariat to bring for discussion at the 1997 third regular session of the Executive Board, a progress report on oversight that will include, among others, an update on the development of a framework of roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for UNICEF, detailed information about the activities of the Office of Internal Audit and a comprehensive report on the strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation functions;

11. Welcomes the intention of the secretariat to move forward to develop systems for finance, supply functions, improved information technology and management information resources, including the Programme Manager System (PROMS), which will provide the initial format for quality assurance;

12. Requests the secretariat to continue regular consultations with the Executive Board on progress made on the implementation of the MEP.

Third regular session
19 September 1996

1996/33. National Committees for UNICEF

The Executive Board,

Having reviewed the progress report on the management excellence process (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.13),

1. *Endorses* the future roles of National Committees for UNICEF and the UNICEF-wide integrated strategy to manage this relationship in partnership with them, including the required structure and accountabilities;

2. *Encourages* UNICEF to give full consideration to various ways in which it can best work with the civil society in each country;

3. *Notes* that the establishment of a new National Committee in a country where there is a UNICEF office and a country programme approved by the Executive Board will depend on the mutual agreement between UNICEF, the respective national Government, as well as the potential organizers of the National Committee;

4. *Requests* the Executive Director to present an oral report on the implementation of this policy at the annual session of the Board in 1998.

Third regular session
19 September 1996

1996/34. Allocation of general resources

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the discussion paper on and the proposals for the allocation of general resources as contained in document E/ICEF/1996/CRP.30, and *commends* the secretariat for the useful work done up to now on the revision of the current general resources allocation system;

2. *Reaffirms* the principles of eligibility of all recipient countries on the basis of the fundamental characteristics of the operational activities of the United Nations Development System, in line with relevant resolutions of the General Assembly;

3. *Reaffirms* that the modified allocation system should:

(a) Continue to be based on the three existing core criteria (child population, the under-five mortality rate and per capita gross national product);

(b) Reflect the need to give higher priority to the low-income countries, in particular the least developed countries, in line with relevant decisions of the General Assembly and the Executive Board;

(c) Be sufficiently flexible so as to accommodate evolving needs of children in recipient countries and in countries in special circumstances;

(d) Apply only to the general resources of UNICEF;

(e) Be transparent, simple and consistent;

4. *Stresses* the need for a substantial increase in general resources for UNICEF;

5. _Requests_ the Executive Director to further develop the proposal taking into account the above guidelines and in close consultation with the Board;

6. _Further requests_ the Executive Director to submit a revised proposal as soon as possible, but no later than the annual session of 1997;

7. _Decides_ that meanwhile general resources shall continue to be allocated on the basis of the current system.

Third regular session
19 September 1996

1996/35. _Documentation_

The Executive Board

1. _Recalls_ the importance of strict observance of the resolutions and rules establishing language arrangements for the different bodies and organs of the United Nations, in particular General Assembly resolutions 50/11 and 50/206;

2. _Decides_ to establish page limits for documents to be submitted to the Executive Board, as contained in the annex to the present decision;

3. _Requests_ the Executive Director to continue to uphold and seek to improve the quality of the reports submitted to the Executive Board, making them more action-oriented and concise, and to enforce, where appropriate, the page limits set out in the annex to the present decision;

4. _Decides_ that statistical annexes, tables and case studies shall, to the extent possible, be presented in addenda to the main document;

5. _Also decides_ that any report exceeding the number of pages set out in the annex to the present decision shall be considered only on an exceptional basis and if duly justified to the Executive Board;

6. _Requests_ the Executive Director to comply with the six-week rule established by the General Assembly and most recently reaffirmed in its resolution 50/206 by undertaking all possible efforts to ensure that documents are submitted to the United Nations Office of Conference and Support Services 10 weeks before the start of a session, and to coordinate closely with the Office of Conference and Support Services in all matters pertaining to the submission and issuance of documentation, including the electronic distribution of Board documentation;

7. _Decides_, on a temporary basis, that in cases where a report has not yet been issued in all languages six weeks before the start of a session, the secretariat may at that time distribute the document to the members of the Executive Board in the language of submission, including by electronic means where possible, and that such documentation shall also be made available to observers at the same time;

8. _Requests_ the Executive Director to examine whether current staffing levels in the secretariat are adequate to satisfy the provisions approved in the present decision with respect to quality, length and timely distribution of documentation;

9. _Calls upon_ all members of the Executive Board to exercise restraint in requesting reports and policy papers and to consider greater use of oral reports;

10. _Reaffirms_ the principle of the simultaneous distribution of all conference room papers in the three working languages of the Executive Board before the start of or during a session.

Annex

PAGE LIMITS FOR REPORTS SUBMITTED TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

UNICEF

1. Policy papers shall not exceed 15 pages;

2. The budget, medium-term plan, UNICEF financial reports and statements, and the reports concerning Greeting Card and related Operations shall not, by their nature, be subject to the 15-page limit, but shall, none the less, be as concise as possible, having due regard to the need to present statistical annexes and data in addenda to the main document, in line with paragraph 4 of the present decision;

3. Country notes shall not exceed the range of 3-4 pages;

4. Country programme recommendations (CPRs) shall not exceed the following ranges:

   (a) CPRs with annual planning levels above $1 million: 15 pages;

   (b) CPRs with annual planning levels of $1 million or less: 6-10 pages;

   (c) Short-duration ("bridging"): 4-8 pages;

   (d) Additional general resources: 3-5 pages;

   (e) "Stand-alone" supplementary funding: 3-4 pages.

Third regular session
19 September 1996

1996/36. _Programme of work for 1997_

The Executive Board

Decides to adopt the following programme of work for 1997 Executive Board sessions:

Programming and Sectoral Segment

First regular session
(20-24 January)
(5-day session)

(1) Country notes (24) (Africa - 8; Americas and the Caribbean - 4; Asia - 3; Middle East and North Africa - 9)

(2) Implementation of the health strategy for UNICEF (decision 1996/6)

(3) Operational papers on selected issues relating to emergency interventions (decision 1996/28)

(4) Follow-up to relevant decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council (decision 1995/38)

(5) (a) Initial proposals on the harmonization of budget presentations, including the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (decision 1996/16)

(b) Proposal on the presentation of integrated budgets, including the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

(6) Follow-up to the audit of the Kenya country office: final report

(7) Management Excellence Programme report

(8) Revised budget for 1996-1997, including the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

(9) Report on the outcome of consultations on Executive Board/secretariat relations

(10) Membership of UNFPA in the UNICEF/WHO Joint Committee on Health Policy

(11) Financial matters: 2/

(a) UNICEF financial report and statements for the biennium ended 31 December 1995

(b) Report to the United Nations Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

Economic and Social Council Segment

Second regular session
(18-19 March)
(2-day session)

(1) Annual report to the Economic and Social Council (decision 1995/5)

(2) Mid-term reviews (MTRs) and major evaluation reports (summaries of MTRs for 21 countries)

(3) 1997 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award

(4) Management Excellence Programme: oral report (decision 1996/32)

Policy, Strategy and Coordination Segment

Annual session
(2-6 June)
(5-day session)

(1) Report of the Executive Director

(2) Follow-up to the World Summit for Children (decision 1992/5)

2/ Deferred from the third regular session of 1996.

(3) Child survival, protection and development in Africa (decision 1995/18)

(4) Oral report on the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa

(5) Implementation of UNICEF policies and strategies on children in need of special protection measures (decision 1996/27)

(6) UNICEF information and communication strategy (decision 1996/15)

(7) Reports of UNICEF/WHO Joint Committee on Health Policy and UNESCO/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education sessions

(8) Greeting Card and related Operations: work plan and proposed budget for 1997

(9) Report of Board members field visit (decision 1992/32)

(10) Management Excellence Programme report (decision 1996/32)

(11) Allocation of general resources (or earlier as per decision 1996/34)

Finance and Budget Segment

Third regular session (9-12 September) (4-day session)	(1) Country programme recommendations (24)
	(2) Integrated budget for 1998-1999, including the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions
	(3) Financial medium-term plan for the period 1997-2000
	(4) UNICEF financial reports/statements
	(5) Supply operations
	(6) Management Excellence Programme report
	(7) Programme of work for 1998
